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THE
DEVIL UPON TWO STICKS
IN ENGLAND.

DEVIL UPON TWO STICKS

IN FIVE ACTS

THE
DEVIL UPON TWO STICKS
IN ENGLAND;

BEING
A CONTINUATION OF
LE DIABLE BOITEUX
OF
L E S A G E.

Haud passibus æquis.—VIRGIL.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
PRINTED AT THE Logographic Press;
AND SOLD BY
J. WALTER No. 169, PICCADILLY; AND
W. RICHARDSON, UNDER THE ROYAL EXCHANGE.

1790.



THE

DEVIL UPON TWO STICKS

IN ENGLAND

ENDING

A CONTINUATION OF

LE BIAIS ROULEUX



LOWEY'S

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DEVIL UPON TWO STICKS.

CHAP. XI.

*The Evening Parties of Fashion, which the
DEVIL upon TWO STICKS discovers to
DON CLEOFAS.*

THEY were in an instant, most conveniently situated on a parapet, in a street at no great distance from Cavendish Square.

"Before I offer to your observation," said the Demon, "a view of those assemblies, where persons of the first classes meet each other, at this time of the evening,—I shall amuse you with the manner in which female youth of distinction are sometimes instructed to shine in them, and to perform

the less important duties of their respective situations.

“ In one of the upper rooms, in the large house immediately opposite, you see a woman of a very genteel appearance, with three young ladies sitting round her.” “ She is their mother, I presume,” said Don Cleofas, “ who is performing the duty of parental instruction to her charming offspring, and teaching them to pursue the path of virtue in which she has trod, and to attain the happiness which she possesses.” “ Alas!” replied the Demon, “ their mother is far otherwise engaged; they do not, at present, occupy her thoughts,—she has not even had time to see them since yesterday morning, and is perfectly satisfied that she performs every parental duty, by allowing them instructors in the various branches of fashionable and elegant accomplishment, and consigning them to the care of a foreign governess.

“ These young people are of high rank, and the lady who is with them, is the person delegated by their mother, to superintend the more material part of their education,—the instruction of their minds ;—and you shall judge in what manner she discharges her duty. Her pupils are on the moment of engaging in their evening lecture ;—each has a portion of study which she reads aloud to her governess, and the eldest of them is now preparing to begin the part which is allotted her. While they are employed in this business, I will repeat the different lectures which form the salutary instruction of the present hour, and by which their dispositions are to be shaped, their virtue confirmed, and their reason strengthened. The first reads as follows :—

The LADY of FASHION.

“ *Cela se fait, & cela ne se fait pas*, is the rule of my life,” said the elegant Cla-

A 2

rinda,

rinda, as I had the honour of attending her on one of her morning walks in the Green Park. "You laugh," continued she, "at the size of my hat, and will tell me, perhaps, that it hides the prettiest face in the world:—with all my heart;—I have no objection whatever to such an assertion, and will give you all the credit you deserve; but other pretty faces are hid as well as mine; and I might answer your ridicule by observing, that, as the attack of bright eyes, morning, noon, and night, would be too much for the men, fashion has kindly invented the enormous covering of our heads, in pity to their hearts.

"But let us suppose, fair lady, for a moment, that fashion should be capricious enough to pare a certain quantity of inches from the circumference of the present modish hat, and reduce it at once, by a nod of arbitrary power, from the size of a coach-wheel, to that of a china-plate, what would you say then?"—"I would say," answered

answered she, "that fashion, who has her paroxysms of sense as well as folly, having observed that the men grew too consequential from her indulgence, was determined to recal them to their proper tone of manners, by giving to bright eyes in the park, as well as at the assembly, the full power of uninterrupted glances."

"And would the gentle, the amiable Clarinda, become so cruel as to adopt the severe transformation?"—— "Without doubt," she replied; *Cela se fait, & cela ne se fait pas*, is the irresistible rule of my conduct.—I would not, at present, be the first to enter upon extremes in any thing; but I should not hesitate an instant to be the second.—I am very tall, and it might appear ridiculous in the description, that a foot-boy, who was no more than three feet high, should follow me when I walked out; but, be assured, if I saw any one person of consequence adopt such a measure, I would instantly dismiss the lofty jack-

napes who is now behind us, and transfer the office of attending me on the promenade, to an imp who would not reach to his elbow. Nay, if the Duchesses of Rutland or Devonshire, thought proper to wear shoes of different colours to-day, you might be certain of seeing my party coloured feet to-morrow.

“ The amusement of life,” continued Clarinda, “ consists in variety ; a change of dress is as necessary as a change of food. Laws, governments and religions vary their forms : manners have their day, and fashions their hour ; and as I have a fortune that permits me to indulge my disposition, and am at a time of life when such indulgence is graceful, I shall vary with the varying mode ; and though I must not yet attempt to present fashion to the town, I shall be ever ready to give my immediate support to those who do. In short, I would be a kind of Cameleon, and instantly assume

assume the colour of every fashionable object that arises before me."

"At this moment, I took the liberty to ask my fair friend, if, when she was tired of officiating as a virgin priestess at the altar of fashion, she would condescend so far as to ask her favourite divinity for an husband." "Be assured, my good friend," replied she, in a tone of absolute determination, "that I never will receive one but from her: for if all the wealth of India—all the blood of the Howards—the best learning of Oxford—and every accomplishment of Paris, were united in one man, who was as handsome as Adonis, and was actually dying at my feet, I should not be tempted to marry him, if he were not the fashion."

"Such were the lively, graceful, but eccentric conversations, I frequently had with this charming young woman; when, on the death of my father, I prepared to

indulge my ardent desire of visiting foreign countries, which his tender wish to have me always with him, had hitherto opposed. As I kissed Clarinda's hand, on bidding her adieu, she returned her kind farewell, and bade me rest assured, that she would never do any thing unworthy of a woman of fashion.

“ In a few months after my departure from England, my letters informed me that she had married a man of high birth and large fortune, for no other reason whatever, but because he was the most fashionable man of the day. The motive for offering her his hand, was of a similar nature; and they, therefore, joined their respective good qualities and accomplishments, in order to become the most fashionable couple in the kingdom.

“ I heard no more of Clarinda, during the four years I employed in making the tour of Europe: but the very day after
my

my return to London, I was on my way to enquire after my fashionable friend, when I met her, as she was passing from a milliner's shop to her carriage. She was going home, she said, and insisted most peremptorily that I should accompany her.

“ General and friendly salutations had not yielded to particular enquiries, when the carriage stopped at her door; and as we entered her dressing-room, I expressed a polite wish to be presented to her Lord.— ‘ Oh, heavens!’ exclaimed she, bursting into a loud laugh, and throwing herself into a chair, ‘ is it possible that you, who ‘ have been travelling all over the world, ‘ to acquire a knowledge of it, and are just ‘ arrived from Paris, where it is so well understood—is it possible that you could ‘ suppose I should live with a husband for ‘ four years?—We have been separated ‘ these six months, and shall never, I believe, unite again.

‘ We

‘ We began,’ continued she, ‘ with separate carriages, as persons of rank ought to do; and, after the birth of our son, we took to separate apartments, which was all very well; when, on a sudden, though he absolutely kept an Opera singer, his Lordship had the impudence to be jealous of me. As for his amours, I did not trouble myself about them;— and even carried my civility to him so far, as to take a box at his Sultana’s benefit: but his jealousy was so vulgar, as well as unjust, as to render him detestable; and he really became so odious to me, that I was determined to leave him. Articles of separation, therefore, were arranged by mutual consent, and I am as you now find me. A separation, as you know, cannot be objected to, but a divorce would be a very serious business indeed. The one keeps me where I am, and is a mere matter of family discord, with which the world has nothing to do. The other, arising from what is considered

‘sidered as a criminal offence, would not
‘only exclude me from the fashionable
‘circles, but deprive me also of that title
‘which gives me a lead in them. Jealous,
‘therefore, as the vulgar blockhead might
‘be, I was not such an idiot as to give
‘him any real cause for being so, and the
‘whole town applauds my conduct.—I
‘promised you, my good friend,’ continued she, with a smile, ‘that I would not do
‘any thing unworthy of a woman of fashion, and you see that I have kept my
‘word.’

“And so much,” added the Demon,
“for forming the dispositions of the female mind:—For you see the governess laughs most heartily at the conclusion of the story, and the young academics join in the mirth.

“However, I must now summon your attention to the lecture of the second sister.

VIRTUE RECOVERED.

“ Constantia was the daughter of a man of family, in Scotland, who had long been settled in Holland, and amassed a large fortune by commerce in that country.— Her mother died in bringing her into the world, and her only brother was an officer of rank in the service of the Republic.— Constantia was beautiful, but her beauty was by no means equal to the more solid excellencies of her mind. From her father she appeared to inherit prudence; and from her brother she learned that chaste reserve and elevated dignity, which while they are considered as noble qualities in our sex, always appear with a superior lustre in the other.

“ With such a cultivated understanding, and such strength of mind as Constantia possessed, her heart was not without the influence of common circumstances :

res : but love, that levels all ranks, and removes all distinctions, at length usurped the dominion of it.

“ An English gentleman, who had inherited from an illustrious family all their spirit, but none of their possessions ; whose heart was rich in every noble virtue, but whose sword was all his portion, served in the troops commanded by her brother. It was easy to distinguish in him a soul and a descent ill-suited to his fortune.—His Colonel did not want the discernment necessary to make such a discovery ;—he pitied, he honoured, and he loved him.—The respect with which he was received in her family, first attracted the attention of the charming Constantia to him.—She thought it her duty to compassionate and reverence what her brother pitied and admired ; and these sentiments soon quickened into the most tender and generous passion.

“ Mr.

“ Mr. M——, whose modest nature would not have aspired to the love of Constantia, and whose gratitude and friendship were disposed to check, on his part, any impulse towards an object which he considered to be beyond the limits of his fortune, could not, however, resist the happiness of being beloved by such a woman.—He saw the most charming of her sex regard him with a look of tenderness beyond the common dictates of friendship or compassion. He endeavoured to smother the sensibilities which such a partiality awakened in his breast; he struggled against the passion which now possessed him, but in vain; every consideration at length yielded to his love; and he seized an opportunity, which was willingly afforded him, of making known to Constantia his grateful adoration. He was heard with the partial favour of sincere passion; and Constantia, superior to disguise, acknowledged the sentiments of her heart.

“ But

“ But their union did not depend upon her; the consent of a father and the approbation of a brother were to be obtained. The task was difficult, but love is enterprising, and the enamoured fair one undertook herself to solicit the sanction on which the happiness of her future life depended. The brother was most likely to be gained, and the first application, therefore, was made to him. Having heard the anxious wishes of his sister's heart, he applauded the wisdom of her choice—he admired the disinterestedness of her passion, and he offered the sincerest congratulations to his friend; but at the same time he informed them both of his serious expectation, that a becoming regard from the one, and an entire obedience from the other, would be paid to the determination of his father, whatever it might be. But that determination blasted all their hopes. The consent which was so easily obtained from the brother, was absolutely refused by the father; and the son, in whose character filial obedience

obedience was the predominant principle, exacted a promise from his friend, under the most solemn sanction of his honour, that he would never more renew his solicitations to Constantia. Mr. M—— would, at any time, have sacrificed his life to such an engagement:—But his honour yielded to his passion, and he continued an occasional, but most secret intercourse with the beloved object of it.

“ At this time the severity of domestic misfortune had forced the amiable Miranda, with her little family, to seek an asylum in Holland. She had been the early associate of Constantia; and the misfortunes of the one, and the late disappointment of the other, heightened the renewal of those sentiments which they had mutually entertained at a former period. In every thing but her love, Miranda was the confidante of her charming friend: she had frequently solicited, with the most sincere and heart-felt anxiety, to know the cause
of

of that melancholy which seemed to be a forerunner of despair, but had long solicited in vain. At length, the secret which had been withheld from the most earnest entreaties of Miranda, was unexpectedly communicated by the wretched Constantia. ‘ You have seen Mr. M——; but interrupt me not with a recital of his virtues,— for know, I am pregnant by him !’

“ Her friend was dumb with amazement at this alarming information; but her mournful astonishment was changed into inexpressible horror, when she heard the resolutions that followed it. ‘ I am certain,’ continued the despairing Constantia, ‘ alas ! too certain that my furious brother will not be contented with a less sacrifice than the life of his wretched sister, her unborn infant, and its unhappy father ; no other atonement will, according to the principles of his rigid honour, wipe off the infamy from the name I have

‘ have disgraced. Great ills must be suffered to obviate greater evils, and I have resolved, with a spirit that no remonstrance can shake, on the course I am to pursue. I have no alternative,—there is but one way left for me,—and I conjure your eternal and inviolable secrecy, when I have disclosed it to you. It is my determined purpose to retire, immediately, to a place which I shall communicate to no one but my friend.—There I shall live unknown, and, if possible, unseen and unattended. I must encounter the hour of pain alone; and if I should survive, which I know not how to wish, these hands must destroy the innocent offspring of my unhappy love. If I return, be secret; but should I return no more, I make it my last request, that you will inform the father of my child how its mother perished.’

“ The tears which flowed in streams from the eyes of the devoted Constantia, were

were mingled with those of her afflicted friend, as they embraced each other.—‘ I have, it is true, bound myself to secrecy,’ replied Miranda; ‘ but there is one condition which must be fulfilled by you, or the obligation to which I have given an unreflecting assent, will be immediately violated by me : what I ask of you, will not be attended with difficulty, nor, I trust, with pain; and if you refuse the compliance I request, then I shall think that it would be a crime of the most heinous nature, should I hesitate to betray you. Promise me, then, that before you lay the hands of death on the poor innocent babe, you will cover it with raiment, kiss its little lips, and give it the nourishment of your breast, which nature will have prepared for it.’ The promise was solemnly made—it was sealed in the embrace of friendship; and that very evening, the despairing Constantia took her flight.

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“ An universal astonishment prevailed among her friends on her departure.—Her family were distressed beyond expression, and her lover was in a state of grief little short of distraction.—The most diligent enquiries were made in vain; every research proved fruitless; and all pursuit eluded.—It was not till after the painful expectation of several tedious months that the disconsolate Miranda heard from her absent friend. At length a letter arrived, which contained nothing more than two lines of invitation to a village on the confines of Holstein. She knew it to be the writing of Constantia, but the brevity of its contents made her tremble for the situation of her friend. She did not, however, delay a moment in obeying the call; and travelling in all possible secrecy, she arrived half dead with agonizing apprehensions, at the door of a little cottage to which she had been directed. On entering this humble dwelling, she beheld her friend pale and emaciated, but bearing in her arms
the

the smiling pledge of her unviolated promise. 'I have obeyed you, Miranda,' half smiling as she spoke; 'I have complied with the terms which you imposed on me, and nature has done the rest.'

"Constantia's absence was universally imputed to the despair of disappointed love; and suspicion itself did not suspect the real cause of it. Her secret was buried in the grave of Miranda's faithful bosom; and the unconscious infant was consigned to the maternal care of her friend. The fugitive, at length, returned to her home, and was received not only without reproach, but with all the kindness of the most tender affection. But this was not all;—Mr. M—— who had been called to England on the death of a rich relation, who had made him his heir, was, at this time come back, in the possession of an ample fortune. That consent which was lately refused, was now most readily granted; and he was soon united to the rescued
object

object of his faithful passion. He soon after returned with his bride to his native country, where Constantia lived and died an honour to the name she bore."

"This is a very affecting tale," said Don Cleofas, "and I perceive that the young lady who read it, has paid the tribute of her tears to its distresses. But I have," continued he, "no little curiosity to know the sentiments of the governess on the subject."

"She sheds no tears on the occasion, I assure you," said the Demon; "her opinion is, that Constantia was a very fortunate woman; and that female honour principally consists in the art of concealing every thing that may tend to impair it.—But as she sees that the story has made one of her pupils weep, and the other two look rather serious, she has desired the third young lady to proceed in her part of the evening lectures. You will, therefore, be so obliging

obliging as to honour me with your attention."

A TALE of other TIMES.

"ALTAMONT, a Knight of renown, passed over many a dreary wild, and through many a gloomy forest, thinking on the lost THEODORA:—At length, not knowing where to go, he let the bridle fall on the neck of his steed, and folding his arms, in an attitude of fullen sorrow, he left the beast that bore him, to take the way he chose. 'There is no path,' said Altamont, 'in this miserable world, that will not lead me to despair!'—Having made this sad ejaculation, he sunk into a train of melancholy reflections, from whence he was soon awakened by the following command of some invisible power:"

Val'rous Knight, approach the gate;—
Sound the horn—nor fear thy fate.

"Amused

“Aroused by the voice from his mournful lethargy, he raised his eyes, and by the glimmering light of the moon, that peeped from between the clouds, he saw a stately castle just before him. He instantly approached the entrance, whose massy gates flew back as he sounded the horn; and when he passed through them, a dwarf approached with humble obeisance, to hold the bridle of his horse, as he alighted:—when turning round, to address himself to the misshapen attendant, his steed snorted flames of fire, and disappeared in a moment, with the dwarf who held him. The Knight stopped, for a few moments, to recover from his astonishment, and then passed on into a spacious court, surrounded with lofty pillars, whose tops emitted small livid flames, just sufficient to discover the skeletons clad in armour, that hung below. As he gazed with renewed astonishment on the fearful scene around him, the voice repeated

Through yonder portals take thy way;
Be brave, be watchful, and obey.

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“Al ta-

“ Altamont now entered the castle, and passing through a vestibule lighted by various lamps, fixed in human skulls, he ascended a flight of steps, when a figure of misshapen form, horrid demeanour, and armed with a mace of iron, prepared to oppose his passage. The Knight drew his sword, and the combat began with mutual fury. Thrice the monster lifted up his horrid weapon, and thrice he missed his aim ;—the fourth blow fell upon the shield of Altamont, and sunk him down on one knee to the ground ; when, as the furious shape was preparing to complete his vengeance, the Knight recovered from his fall, and, with renewed agility, plunged his sword into the bosom of his antagonist, who uttering a dreadful shriek, vanished into air ; when there instantly arose, from the place where he fell, a tree of the darkest verdure, whose leaves trickled down drops of blood.

“ Altamont, after a short pause, pursued his way undismayed, and came to the

VOL. III. B entrance

entrance of a spacious hall. It was hung with black, and faintly illuminated by tapers: on either side of it were six gigantic skeletons, clad in winding-sheets, and each of them sitting by the side of a grave. At the end of this immense chamber, he beheld a kind of altar, whereon an human figure appeared to repose. The Knight approached,—and, with inexpressible grief, beheld his Theodora locked fast in the bonds of enchantment. She was warm with life, but insensible of his presence, and deaf to his lamentations;—her eyes were closed, and her limbs were motionless; and when he seized her hand, to awaken her from the trance, she heaved a deep sigh,—the tapers were instantly extinguished,—and all was darkness.

“ Altamont, fatigued with his journey, and exhausted in the combat, but yet more oppressed by sorrow and disappointment, laid his sword on the altar, and reclined his head

head on the respiring bosom of his love,—
when the voice again exclaimed,

Let not sleep your eye-lids close,
Be vigilant,—and end your woes.

“ The Knight lifted up his head and sighed,—he bedewed the altar with his tears ;—he addressed the stars, which now glimmered through the casements, and waited with impatience for the morning. The morning, at length, began to dawn ;—the sun appeared above the horizon, and the moment its early ray beamed on the face of Theodora, a bell began to toll, and at the third stroke, the twelve skeletons plunged into their graves, which closed in a moment over them :—The bell renewed its awful sound,—loud peals of thunder followed,—blue lightnings flashed,—the battlements of the castle fell—Altamont seized his sword, and—

“ Here,” said the Demon, smiling, “ the young lady drops her book, as you see,
B 2 from

from affright, and hides her face with her hands, while her two sisters, from a similar influence, are become as motionless as the enchanted lady on the altar. The governess forces a laugh on the occasion; but she is not without her imaginary alarms; and so much for that branch of instruction which is to strengthen the minds of her pupils. However, to dissipate the fears of the young people, as well as her own, she will read a story in her turn, and is now consigning the knotting-shuttle to her work-bag, to take up the volume on the table before her, from whence she will select an history to her own fancy, that is to conclude the literary studies of the evening."

"If her history has any enchantments in it," replied Don Cleofas, "they will be of a very different nature, I should imagine, from those which we have just heard; we are not going to have any more examples of the horrible; we shall hear no
more,

more, I fancy, of spirits and spectres, and trees distilling blood, and combats with monsters."

"The lady," answered Asmodeus, "is on the moment of satisfying your curiosity, and I shall not anticipate her in the agreeable business."

The governess read as follows:—

THE WIFE OF BESANÇON;

A Tale of the twelfth Century.

"A scholar who came to Besançon to finish his studies, conceived a violent inclination for a merchant's wife in the town, and he endeavoured by every means he could devise, to introduce himself to the lady. At length he accomplished this desirable object, and was so fortunate as to render himself agreeable to her; but his gallant assiduities and the continual repetition

tition of his visits, excited some degree of jealousy in the husband, who, in order to be satisfied if there was any real cause of suspicion, employed his little niece, whom he had brought up in his family, for that purpose.

“ This girl was admirably well qualified for the employment assigned her, as she was very shrewd, for one of her years ; but more particularly as she was not, in the least degree, suspected by the parties. One day as the scholar pressed the dame, in the most ardent manner, to consent to a secret meeting,— ‘ I cannot, at present,’ answered the wife, ‘ by any means grant your request; but have a little patience— ‘ it will not be long before my husband ‘ will take a journey which he now meditates ; and we shall then have frequent ‘ opportunities of seeing each other, which ‘ may be greatly facilitated by the means ‘ I shall possess of conducting you to my ‘ apartment, without the possibility of ‘ being seen by any one ; as my husband, ‘ when-

‘ whenever he goes from home, if it be
‘ but for a day, always leaves in my pos-
‘ session the key of the garden-gate.’

“ Unfortunately for them, this conversation was overheard by the little spy, and she hastened away to carry the intelligence to her uncle; who, on being acquainted with his wife’s designs, resolved to form an instant plan for the detection of the lovers. He, therefore, made a pretence that he was obliged to take a journey into Germany, on some commercial business, and gave notice to his wife to prepare every thing for his setting out on the following day.

“ He accordingly departed at an early hour of the morning, but at night returned to Besançon, and hastened to take his post at the garden-gate, being firmly persuaded that the scholar had, in the mean time, received notice to repair thither. His conjecture was well-founded; for he had not remained long in that situation, before the

impatient lady came and opened the gate ; when she found her husband waiting, and in the persuasion that it was her lover, embraced him, and took him by the hand, to lead him to her chamber. The good man, that he might not be discovered, followed in silence, concealing his face with the hood of his cloak.

“ But it is of all things the most difficult to deceive an artful woman. The very great precaution of her gallant, made her suspect that, at least, it was not the scholar who was accompanying her, and a very little examination convinced her that it was her own dearly beloved husband : however, with an extraordinary presence of mind, she said to him, as if she continued to take him for her gallant, ‘ How rejoiced I am, ‘ my dear friend, that you have been so ‘ punctual to your appointment ; nevertheless, I cannot enjoy the pleasure of ‘ your company till all the family are gone ‘ to rest ; but come along with me, I will
‘ hide

‘ hide you in a place of security ; and as
‘ soon as every thing is quiet, I will return
‘ and conduct you to my apartment ; where,
‘ I trust, you will find a reception that will
‘ amply reward your patience.’

“ It sometimes happens that the ass has one thing in contemplation, and the driver another ; and that was precisely what the jealous husband experienced on the present occasion. He was certain he should catch his wife in the snare which he had laid for her, and was himself caught in it. The cunning woman led him to a lower room, where she requested him to remain in silence, and having locked the door, she returned to the garden-gate, where she found the scholar waiting, in his turn ; who, to say the truth, met with a much better reception than she had given to her husband, and was hastily conducted to her apartment.

“ After some caresses, which it would be unnatural for two lovers who had so long
B 5 wished

wished for the present meeting, to deny each other, she went down stairs to speak to her servants. ' You have seen,' said she, ' a scholar come frequently to my house. It is, I know not how long, that I have been teased with his ridiculous and importunate addresses; and, till this moment, I have never been able to contrive any proper and effectual means to get rid of him. But, at length, in order to cure him of his disgraceful passion, I have been obliged to make a pretended assignation with him, in the absence of my husband. He is now actually shut up in one of the lower chambers;—here is the key, go and chastise him as he deserves, that he may never again be troubled with an inclination to seduce a woman of character. If you perform the business to my satisfaction, I promise that you shall have plenty of the best wine in your master's cellar, to regale you on your return.'

" The

“ The whole family was roused in an instant:—Every one in the house, the footman, the cook, the scullion, the chambermaids, the little niece herself, with two nephews of the merchant, hurried away, and providing themselves with canes and whips, rushed into the lower chamber, where the husband was confined, and wrapping up the poor man’s head in the hood of his cloak, to prevent him from giving the alarm, they belaboured him without mercy. The unhappy victim, after a most severe beating, was carried out of the house, and thrown upon a dunghill. The triumphant lady performed her promise, by treating them all, on their return, with the best wine of Burgundy, and then went quietly to supper with her gallant.

“ As for the jealous husband, the discipline he had received reduced him, as may be supposed, to a very deplorable condition, and very early the next morning, he was brought, half dead, to his own house.

His wife was awakened by the servants, from a pleasing dream, which continued in her fancy the agreeable engagement of the preceding night, to be informed of the melancholy accident which had befallen their master. She immediately rose, threw on her cloaths in haste, and hurried away, with a well dissembled terror in her looks, to enquire the cause of his misfortune.— He also, but from a very different motive, dissembled in his turn, and told her that he had been attacked on the road by robbers, and left half dead upon the spot.— Alarmed at this information, she ordered a medicinal bath to be immediately prepared for him,—attended him with the most assiduous care, and, with the assistance of the best medical advice, he soon recovered.— However, amidst all his sufferings, he thought himself extremely fortunate in having acquired, even at the expence of so much pain and mortification, the indubitable assurance of his wife's virtues; and continued, from that time, to conduct himself

self towards her with the most confidential love and affection."

"This is just such a moral story," said Don Cleofas, "as I expected; and the reader of it, if I may judge from the simper on her countenance, and the manner in which she shuts her book, is firmly of opinion, that jealousy in an husband, is that kind of impertinence which cannot be too severely treated."

"That is not," answered the Demon, "the most improbable conjecture which has escaped your Lordship, during the course of the evening. We have, however, bestowed a sufficient portion of it on this party; and I shall only add, that the young ladies will now turn to their piano forte; when the eldest will warble a song in Italian, the second in French, and the youngest in English; all of which will turn upon the improving subject of love and lovers: They will then have each a jelly for their
sup-

suppers, and retire to their chamber ; where they will talk over, with their waiting-maid, the superior advantages of a life of fashion—the possibility of a woman's losing her chastity, without losing her reputation,—the awful moralities of ghosts, goblins, and enchantments,—and the best method of curing jealous husbands —Thus are children of fashion educated, whose fashionable mothers entrust the culture of their minds to fashionable governesses."

"But who is that high-dressed lady," said the Count, "who has this moment entered the large room on the first-floor ; and, with a *femme de chambre* holding lights on each side of her, is examining her whole-length adjustments in a glass at the end of it?"

"I am glad she did not escape us," answered Asmodeus, "for she is the mother of the young people above ; and is just come from a three hours attendance on the

the ceremonies of her toilette. She will now proceed to pay a score of visits; shew herself at two or three assemblies; drop in, for half an hour, at a private concert; and then join a card party of her intimate friends, where she will sup, and return home about an hour before the time when her daughters usually rise."—"I am glad to find," said the Count, "that they are, at least, taught to keep good hours." "If the same proper attention," replied the Demon, "was employed to improve their minds, as is practised to preserve their health, and cherish their beauty, they would become ornaments to their sex." "But has the lady," demanded the Count, "no husband? and have these children no father?"—"Most certainly yes," answered the Demon; "and he is a very worthy, amiable and well-bred man; but he has a place at Court, and is withal a Member of Parliament; so that, what with the duties required by his station, and the duties claimed by his country, he, poor gentleman,

man, is so entirely occupied, as to have no time whatever to attend to those of his family."

"In the house adjoining," said Don Cleofas, "I see an elegant female figure dressed in a superb dishabille, lolling on a sofa; before her is a table with a writing equipage on it, and a *porcelain vase* of an enormous size, which is there, I presume, for some medicinal purpose.—The lady has the languid air of indisposition, and has been, perhaps, prescribed by her physicians, some sort of local bath or embrocation, which is contained in this china vessel." "I rather flatter myself," answered Asmodeus, "that the explanation of this peculiar scene will give you a new and very unsuspected example of female caprice."

"The lady is afflicted with no other disorder but that to which young married women are naturally subject. It is between

tween seven and eight months since a very accomplished nobleman led her to the altar, and she is now pretty far advanced in her first pregnancy. But having been accustomed to be admired, and to admire herself for her superior shape and figure, she is not only very much dissatisfied with the growing alteration of her form, but also, from a peculiar kind of modesty, or as some good-natured people would call it, affectation, she is extremely ashamed of the circumstance. To conceal, therefore, as much as possible, the appearance of her encreasing circumference, she has employed every possible contrivance in the arrangement of her dress; and to turn the curious eyes of her visitants from the state of her own figure, she has ordered a stupendous tea-pot, which contains a cooling phitifane, to be placed on the table.

“ This singular scheme has hitherto had the desired success; and her visiting acquaintance are so engaged in contemplating

ting the size and curiosity of this capacious vessel, that her particular situation has hitherto been unnoticed by them. She calls it *optical policy*;—but of all this fanciful nonsense, the infant which makes her a mother, will entirely cure her. Her Lord, from this ridiculous conduct, is full of alarms and apprehensions that she will not love the child when it comes into the world; but he will find himself most agreeably mistaken:—She will prove as fond and as tender a parent as ever yearned over the babe at her breast.

“ Let me, however, at present, beg of you,” continued the Demon, “ to cast your eyes towards the upper apartment of the house to the left of us, where an elderly lady is quietly taking a glass of that wholesome cordial which is so comfortable to chilly stomachs and dejected spirits.”

“ But,” interrupted Don Cleofas, “ if I am not greatly deceived, she appears to be
pre-

preparing herself for consolation of a very different and more elevating nature; for, from the velvet cushion on the carpet, and the large book placed against the back of a chair, I should imagine that the old lady is qualifying herself for the devout offering of her evening orisons."

"It is even so," replied the Demon; "and the object of her devotions is of such a singular nature, that I shall, without apology, enter into a little historical explanation of them."

"This lady, when she was about sixteen, was what is called a pretty, black-eyed girl; but she has now passed her fiftieth year, and bears not any traces of her former charms. She married at a very early period an honest, good-natured, country gentleman, who left her at the age of forty-six, a sprightly widow, with every disposition to receive another husband.

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“ By employing arts,—an account of which I shall not prolong my story to relate,—and directing the whole artillery of her experience against a very handsome young gentleman in her neighbourhood, who, at the age of twenty-three, had very seldom been from home, she soon persuaded him, to the infinite regret of his friends and relations, to accompany her to the altar, and take a legitimate possession of her. She did not, however, like giddy, inconsiderate wives, lay aside, after marriage, the attractive graces which gained an husband’s affections; but continued them, with unremitted attention, in order to preserve the heart she had won.

“ After having passed some time in the country, and exposed her young husband at every race and assembly in the neighbourhood, she became anxious to shew herself in all the pride of matrimonial happiness, amidst the fashionable scenes of the capital; to whirl her Adonis round the wheel of
Ranelagh,

Ranelagh, and exhibit him to the envy of youth and beauty, in a side-box at the play-house, or in the pit of the Opera.

“ This was the irreparable error of her life, and to the silly vanity which occasioned it, she owes the tormenting anxiety that now embitters her days, and will continue to harass her to the conclusion of them. In the country, she could keep her darling spouse, as it were, within her own pale,—preserve him from all danger of seduction, and place him at a distance from the attractions of elegant beauty; but she had been a very short time in London, when she found his attentions lessen—his fondness diminish, and his ardour evaporate. In his morning walk, for she could no longer keep him for ever by her side,—and in his evening ramble, of which he would not always be deprived,—he saw, and became acquainted with forms so different from that which he continually beheld at home, as to fill his mind with disgust

gust at the sight of his antiquated wife, and, of course, to render her importunate caresses irksome and nauseating.

“ This natural change in his conduct, did not, as we may suppose, improve the comfort of his domestic life ; on the contrary, tears, reproaches, and bitter bewailings, seemed to threaten the very existence of it. Finding, however, that all this melancholy business would not succeed, she determined to play the coquette, and call in jealousy to aid her endeavours to restore those affections which were speeding hastily from her.—But this stroke of policy did not succeed ; for jealousy would not come at her call,—and the careless husband was well pleased to leave his disappointed wife in a *tête à tête* with a young half-pay officer, whom she appeared to entertain with very distinguished partiality, in order to go in search of company which he found far more attractive.

“ This plan proving unsuccessful, was followed by a determination to employ her whole attentions on the renewal of her shattered form, and the restoration of a wrinkled visage. For this purpose, her toilette was covered with all the various lotions which promise to age the bloom of youth;—the purchased hair composed her ringlets,—artificial teeth repaired the ruins of her mouth,—cork hips and pads were contrived to give a seeming roundness to her skinny shape,—the plumes waved on her head,—the transparent gauze half displayed a whitened bosom,—the whole art of millinery was employed in external decoration, and she breathed all the odours of the perfumer’s shop.

“ The hour of assured victory drew nigh, and she, at length, presented herself in all her glory, to her expecting husband, at the moment of his return from an appointed visit to a little milk-maid in a garret, who had no other beauties but those
of

nature. Disappointment, however, too often treads on the heels of hope ; and she was received ; not with the ardour of awakened passion, but with all the chilling awkwardness of surprise and amazement.

“ At length, deprived of every human means of comfort, like the rest of mankind, when all earthly hopes fail, she determined to make her appeal to Heaven. She therefore, immediately ordered the large velvet cushion, on which she is now kneeling, enriched it with all the splendour of fringe and tassels, bought a new magnificent bible, furnished herself with every manual form of prayer, and she now daily passes some of the many leisure hours her faithless husband leaves her to herself, in addressing Heaven to reform his affections to her ardent wishes : but she has not yet reflected that the æra of miracles is past, and that nothing but a supernatural interference can make a young man, possessing all the means and faculties of enjoying the pleasures

youth that continually tempts him, to assume even the complaisant appearance of being satisfied with the imperfect raptures of age and deformity.

"This," continued the Demon, "is the folly of devotion;—I shall now proceed to shew you something like the blasphemy of it. Give your attention, if you please, to what is passing in that large house to the right, whose principal apartment blazes with noon tide splendour, and tell me what appears to be going forward there; for I very much question whether you will trust your senses at the sight of such an extraordinary spectacle." "If my eyes do not deceive me," replied Don Cleofas, "or your worship has not thought proper to amuse me with an illusion, I perceive a kind of state-couch, on which reposes a white cat, adorned with lace and diamonds, with a litter of her young ones robed in satin. A large company is also assembled

sembled in the apartment, as it appears, for the ceremony of some splendid scene of festivity.

"Be assured, my good friend," replied Asmodeus, "there is no deception whatever. You behold a miserable reality, that is shocking to human nature, and is the unnatural work of a female being, who is a disgrace to it.

"She is a woman of rank and immense fortune, who has lately danced on the grave of the best husband, and the most accomplished nobleman in this country, whose days her enormities cut short; and she now prefers the animals you see so highly distinguished, to the children which he left behind him.

"A favourite cat has lately become a mother, and the same ceremonies wait upon the circumstance, as if it was a rational being of the first merit and distinction.— The splendid couch is prepared expressly for

for the occasion, the creature is decorated with all the superb jewels of the family;—the young ones are arrayed in more costly habits than this despicable woman ever allowed to her own children, and a most elegant supper, with music, is preparing, and a dance will close the festival. The guests, indeed, as may well be supposed, are not persons of her own rank; but her principal tradesmen and their families; who, to preserve the favour of such a wealthy customer, submit to be present at the shocking ceremonials that she is now preparing;—for to complete the abominable business, the new-born kittens will all be baptized, in strict conformity to the rites of the established church of this country; except that she will be obliged to employ her butler to read the service, instead of a clergyman.

“ If you will take the trouble to throw a glance towards the stair-case, you will there see a little boy drowned in tears, and

fobbing with distress. That is her eldest son, the possessor of his father's titles, and the heir of her fortune, who is discarded from her presence, to the pity of the servants, and is wishing most devoutly that he were a cat, for then he thinks his mother would love him."

"I could almost believe," said the Count, "that this woman is one of the worst of your confraternity, who has assumed the female form of human nature, to perpetrate some peculiar mischief."

"By no means," answered the Demon; "such characters are the worst calculated of any, to forward the end of our missions. When vice is practised to such an excess, and with similar audacity, it operates as a powerful antidote, instead of a seducing example."

"But I have neglected," added Asmodeus, "to point out to you the mistress of all
all

all this precious business." "I will excuse you that trouble," answered the Count: "I wish you to shew me human beings, and not monsters."

"I cannot disapprove," said the Demon, "humanly speaking, of the abhorrent indignation that occupies your mind; but to convert it into a more pleasing sentiment, I shall introduce you to a scene that ennobles the human character, and is now concluding in the small house almost opposite to us, which I had hitherto passed by, in order that I might direct your attention thither at the moment a business so worthy your regard was transacting in it."

"I perceive," said Don Cleofas, "as I suppose, a family assembly; and from the variety of parchments which I see on the table, I may not be very much out in my conjecture, if I presume that a matrimonial contract is completing there, under

the influence of the best and noblest passions of the human breast."

"They are all, it is true," replied Afmodeus, "concerned in the business, though it is not immediately calculated to end in a wedding.—It is briefly as follows:—

"The gentleman at the upper-end of the table, has been for some years past, a governor in the East-Indies, and is returned with a large fortune, which is one among the very few that have been gained in a country of plunder and oppression, without reproach.—He has not been arrived many days, and before he has provided an house, a carriage, or almost a servant, has bestowed on all his near relations an ample independence. Having done this to-day for them, to-morrow he will begin to think of himself.—The lady who sits near him is his mother, the rest are his brothers and their children." "Indeed," exclaimed Don Cleofas,

Cleofas, "if there is any thing in this world that can elevate envy into a virtue, it is such an act, and such an assembly as this."

"I must now," said the Demon, "request your Lordship to accompany me in passing the roof behind us, when we shall find ourselves commodiously situated to make our observations on what is going forward in the next street."

This arrangement was instantly accomplished; and the first object which engaged the notice of Don Cleofas, was a lady dressed in black, who was surrounded by several grave persons of both sexes, with books in their hands, and engaged in singing, while a little blind girl accompanied them on an organ. "There appears," said the Count, "in the room immediately before us, to be something of *Concerto spirituale*, which, however, I do not very well comprehend."

"It is as you conjecture," replied Affmodeus, "a meeting of devotion, and is held at the house of a woman of fortune, who is a warm protectress of a religious sect known by the name of Methodists;—and while the party are singing their hymns, I will accompany them with the history of the lady.

"She is a rich widow, and possesses no small remains of that beauty which was very triumphant in its vernal day. At a fashionable boarding-school, she imbibed a taste for novel reading, which has, more or less, governed the subsequent course of her life. From that boarding-school, thanks to the influence of a circulating-library, she ran away with an handsome young officer of small fortune, and lived with him for almost two years, upon love in a cottage. She bore up against the dulness of retirement with some degree of resolution, and rested what happiness she could connect with her situation, not on the feelings of
her

her heart, but on the different pictures that novelists had given of love and solitude.

“ Her dearest Henry was as little contented with his situation as herself;—he had long been tired of tracing true lover’s knots in snow, during the winter, and crowning his Myrtilla’s hair with chaplets of wild flowers, during the fairer seasons of the year: and as the relations of his wife were inflexible, and she wanted three years of legal maturity, he was determined to leave her to the care of an old aunt, and take a reviving peep into the world at large. But the unexpected death of an elder brother fortunately put an end to this plan of operations, and his consequent succession to a good estate reconciled his wife’s relations to their marriage, and furnished all the means of figuring in the world, which was so suited to the dispositions of them both.

“The hurry of pleasure, and the novelty of fashionable life, took her, at once, from her favourite studies; and, except while her hair was dressing, she seldom looked into a book. But a life of pleasure is a life of expence, and Henry’s fortune sunk beneath the demands which elegant dissipation made upon it. He, however, possessed the resolution to retire in time to his country residence, in order to pursue a plan of economy, which promised, in a very few years, to re-establish his affairs.”

“Myrtilla, amidst the pleasures of the capital, had conceived an absolute horror at every idea of sequestered life, and heaved a bitter sigh, and shed a flood of tears as her coach drove from the door of an elegant town-house which she was to inhabit no more.”

“Dry your tears, my love,” said Henry, “and weep no more. We have sacrificed sufficiently to pleasure; let us now pay
our

‘our adorations to reason. I shall amuse
 ‘myself in the cultivation and the im-
 ‘provement of my estate, and you must
 ‘employ your time in the instruction of
 ‘your mind. London has known you as
 ‘a beauty; and, on your return, it shall
 ‘afford you equal admiration as a woman
 ‘of superior understanding.’ “Amid
 all her afflictions she was flattered at this
 idea; and on her arrival in the country,
 prepared herself for studious employments.

“She began her studies with *Clelia*, *Cas-*
sandra, and the elder romances, pursued
 her course along the fairy ground of sen-
 timent, so beautifully disposed by *Richard-*
son; and continued her literary route thro’
 all the various paths in which his miserable
 imitators seduce the incautious mind to
 forget itself.

“Her brain being thus stored with every
 tender and heroic sentiment, and adorned
 with all the high-wrought pictures of happy

or wretched life; she took the lead in the conversations of her neighbourhood,—kept “squires in order,—and made vicars silent by her powerful elocution. Enamoured of that genius which could work such wonders in the country, she began to languish for the moment when she could unveil her talents to the assemblies of the capital, and turn the envy which had been formerly levelled at the beauty of her person, to the superior powers and brilliance of her mind.

“At this period her husband was attacked with a fever, caught by frequently visiting a sick tenant, which in a few days consigned him to the tomb, and she was left a widow with a large jointure, and without restraint.

“As soon, therefore, as the dirges due, and sad array of her dear Henry would admit, she set off for London, and engaged in those societies which afforded her an opportunity of entering on the career

reer of her ambition. But among men of science, and women of the world, her high-flown rhapsodies gained no credit; and with every prepossession in her own favour, she could not but perceive that she was an object of ridicule instead of applause.

"Thus was her ardour of becoming conspicuous severely checked; but it was by no means suppressed; and observing that many persons whose understandings she held to be very inferior to her own, made no inconsiderable figure, by boldly attacking common opinions, and haranguing against religion itself, under the guise of destroying vulgar prejudices, she was determined to commence unbeliever; and had already begun to read some of the most fashionable deistical writers; when, in disputing with an artful methodist clergyman, he so contrived to work upon her vanity and animate her sensibility, that her superstructure of infidelity was at once destroyed, and she is now become a boasted disciple of the

the tabernacle. Her fortune gives her there the most flattering consequence; her enthusiasm is also warmed by the most elevating objects; and the idea of being canonized as a Saint, makes her ample amends for having been despised as a Wit."

"This is, I presume, a religious quarter of the town," said Don Cleofas; "for in the very next house there is a *tête à tête*, which seems also to be of a devotional tendency:—For the gentleman whom I see engaged in reading to a lady, appears, by his habit, to be an ecclesiastic; and, from the gravity of her appearance, I should suppose that she is giving her attention to a discourse on some subject of a pious nature."

"You are perfectly right," answered Asmodeus; "and the occasion of this lecture will furnish you with a very ridiculous example of professional vanity."

"You

“ You must know then, that this good lady is very lately recovered from a severe illness, which her physician, who is of the first eminence, pronounced to be irrecoverable; and this excellent clergyman, who is a famous, popular preacher, in order to afford the last proof of gratitude to his patroness, had prepared a sermon full of eloquence and eulogium, to grace her funeral. But nature contrived, somehow or other, to disappoint the expectations both of the medical and theological doctor; and the lady's recovery rendered useless this laboured specimen of posthumous adulation.

“ The anxious divine, however, who is too proud of his favourite composition, to let it remain entirely unknown, has waited upon the lady who is the subject of it, to inform her of its history, and to request the favour, since she is alive, to hear all the fine things he intended to have said of her, in case she had been dead. Curiosity has induced

duced her to yield to his importunity, and you may discover, by the occasional fimper on her countenance, what she thinks of the solemn flattery of the discourse, and the filly vanity of the author of it. When he has finished the business, he will desire her acceptance of it; and, as soon as he has taken his tea, and taken his leave, this pompous oration, which was intended to consign her so honourably to the tomb, will, in return, be complimented with a Roman funeral;—for she will instantly throw it into the fire.

“In the house to the right,” continued the Demon, “there is another *tête à tête* for your Lordship’s observation. Those good people, however, have nothing to do with sermons or manuals of spiritual devotion;—their study is confined to that description of hieroglyphics which are exhibited in a pack of cards.—It is a gentleman and his lady, who are, this evening, engaged to an assembly, and are preparing
them:

themselves, by the practice of a few secret manœuvres, to make the party a matter of profit as well as pleasure. The history of these people will not prove unentertaining, and I shall therefore request you to favour it with your attention.

"Mrs. B—— is of a respectable family, had a genteel fortune, and was married at an early age, to an amiable man, who has a very profitable place in one of the public offices, with the income of which they might support themselves, not only in real comfort, but moderate elegance, did not the love of cards absorb all other objects, and not only induce her to risk sums which her situation will not admit of losing, but render her wholly inattentive to that oeconomy, without which, wealth itself must melt away. Her husband, who was not originally fond of card-table diversions, to preserve peace, and render his life quiet, has brought himself not only to the habits of play, but also to a painful anxiety

anxiety for the gains of it; and his leisure hours, which used to be employed in literary amusements, are now wholly devoted to the demon of gaming.

“ This infatuated woman employs all the thoughts of the morning upon the party to which she is engaged in the evening. If that is fixed, she is happy; if it is doubtful, she is anxious; but if it cannot by any means be arranged, she is miserable, fractious, and intolerable; so that her husband, when the unsuccessful run of a few nights has reduced their finances, and a few days secession from play would have been very convenient to his exchequer,—has oftentimes sent some of his plate to a pawnbroker, in order to raise the necessary supply, rather than suffer the ill-humour, violence, and cruel reproaches with which he never fails to be harassed, when the evening passes away without her favourite amusement.

“ It

“ It may, indeed, be observed that, in the business of gaming, there is a time to win and a time to lose, and though these people may be sometimes distressed by loss, they must also be sometimes enriched by gain. This frequently happens to them; and if the gains were wisely applied to supply what may have been lost,—the inconvenience arising from the card-table might not, at the year’s end, be of any material consequence: but this woman, when she wins, indulges herself in every extravagance, and when she loses, intrudes upon the fund that ought to support her family, to supply her wants; so that unless fortune is very favourable indeed, she will, in the end, bring down ruin on herself and her husband. It is an happy circumstance that she has no children, or they might be sacrificed to the ruling passion of their infatuated mother.

“ But the mere loss of money which may be dissipated at play, though a
very

very considerable evil, does not form the worst part of the business : Mrs. B—— is suffering consequences of a more alarming nature ; for every amiable disposition she once possessed is departing from her, and her personal charms are fading apace into premature deformity. The agitations of play have affected her mind, her manners, and her beauty ; indeed, it is not possible for them to resist the continual fever of her spirits. If she loses, she is sleepless with vexation ; if she wins, the emotions of joy keep her awake ; and half the day is passed in that sleep which the anxious vigils of the night have banished from her eye-lids.

“ Another inconvenience, and of a nature equally injurious and disgraceful, which results from this passion, is the promiscuous company that frequent her house to assist her in the indulgence of it ; for as a love of card amusements, and a purse equal to their demands, are the principal quali-

qualifications she requires in her society, a very motley troop of figures may be supposed to adorn it. Indeed, many of her most respectable friends have ceased to expose themselves to the mortification of being treated with neglect on account of their indisposition to the card-table, and frequent her house no more. They had long found themselves treated with coolness, while ill-bred, insolent, and well-dressed characters were received with open arms, and favoured with the most cordial attentions, if they did but discover a readiness to form those parties which produce the miserable happiness of her life.

“ In short, whoever or whatever will contribute to her favourite amusement, is not only preferred to the man of virtue, the woman of elegance, or the friend, but is permitted to indulge in familiarity, or practise insolence with patient submission. An old gentleman, who is her near relation, and intended to have left her his whole

whole fortune, has given her up for ever, from the rudeness with which he was treated by her, in order to offer her adulations to a man who had neither character, consequence or manners, but whose money she hoped to win.

“Another circumstance is yet behind, which forebodes consequences of a still more unpleasant nature. When impelled by temporary distress, or the fear of losing when they had no money to pay, this wretched woman has persuaded her complying husband to consent to the previous arrangements of signs and tokens, by which they might insure success. This business has been carried on for a considerable time, very much to their advantage; but some have discovered the signals, and others begin to suspect that they practise these arts which degrade them to the level of common pickpockets. The consequences that may follow are of an alarming nature; but the love of play, when indulged to excess,

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is incorrigible ; it deadens the feelings of humanity,—absorbs every idea of justice, and ends in a total annihilation of every virtuous principle.

“ This miserable woman began by being a dupe, and she is on the point of concluding with all the qualities of a sharper. In a very short time, she will want nothing but a beak, talons and plumage, to become a bird of prey.”

“ This self-same gambling,” said Don Cleofas, “ is, I believe, a most delicious vice, for promoting the interests of your con-fraternity.” “ I am most ready to acknowledge,” answered the Demon, “ that it is a very principal support of our constitution ; and encreases the population of our country more than the aggregate influence of all the other vices of the human calendar. But this is not a time for moralizing, and I shall recommend you to defer that agreeable business to a future period,

period, when you may have leisure to reflect on the various scenes which it is my present office to discover to you. And, in order to continue the course of them, you must transfer your attention to the house whose upper windows are adorned with pots of flowering shrubs. It is a lodging house, and we will begin with the upper story, where you may see an elegant young clergyman, who is just entering the room, as smart as the canon law will suffer him. He is just returned from dining with a nobleman who is his patron, and is hastening to undress himself, to pay a visit to a little harlot, with whom he made an assignation this morning in Kensington-gardens. He has, however, the merit of decency in the business, for you will shortly see as complete a transformation in his apartment, as you ever saw on the theatre. The sable suit will be covered with a long riding-coat,—his silk stockings will be lost in boots,—his cane will be changed into a whip,

whip, and his fine beaver into a round hat."

"The metamorphosis is already so complete," said Don Cleofas, "that his father, were he to meet him, would not know his son: but now, he has covered his well-dressed head with a brown wig, I really doubt, were he to look in the glass, whether he would know himself. Among his other qualifications," answered Asmodeus, "he is a good historian, and remembers that some of the most distinguished persons among the Romans, when they wished to enjoy any little scheme incognito, always applied to the disguising aid of a periwig.

"However," continued the Demon, "as his reverence has sallied forth from his chamber, you will be so kind as to let your eyes descend to the apartment beneath it."

"I see a lady there," said Don Cleofas, "to all appearance very busily engaged in

writing." "And it is," interrupted Asmodeus, "on a subject of singular importance.

"That amiable person is one of the peevish class of animals called old maids : she is now near forty, and lived with her father till he died, which was about three months ago. Though she is not ugly, and has a very genteel fortune, she has preserved, to such an advanced period, the boasted state of virgin glory. From the age of sixteen she has always professed a most violent aversion to the other sex.—

' There was nothing in the world she hated
' so much as the men; they were the most
' odious beings in the creation; nothing
' but deceit, falsehood, vice, and every
' thing that is bad, was to be found among
' them.'—Such were her constant declarations for upwards of twenty years, and they really prevented her from being well married, again and again : for some foolish men believed her to be sincere in these

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agreeable opinions, and, of course, turned away from her; while others, who were better acquainted with the female heart, considered a woman who was thus always railing against the men, to be the most likely of all others to play a slippery trick, with the first that came conveniently in her way. So that many of these horrid creatures used to smile whenever she repeated her favourite declaration, that as soon as her father died, she would retire into the country, and see no more of them. Her father, as I have already told you, is now dead, and the antiquated virgin is actually preparing to execute her resolution, by retiring into the country;—but it will be with John, her handsome young footman, to whom she is now writing a letter, to break the proposal to him.

“The lady on the ground-floor,” continued the Demon, “is of a very different disposition.” “So I perceive,” answered Don Cleofas; “she is not such a

fool as to be always railing against the men in public, and always longing for one of them in private. Though she appears, also, to be a little advanced in life, there is something or other about her, but whether personal charms or personal property, I do not pretend to determine, that calls forth the most attentive assiduities of the gentleman who is now paying his court to her."

"Ah, my good friend," replied Asmodeus, "your conjecture, though rather positively delivered, does not possess a solid foundation. Neither love, marriage, nor amorous intrigue, have any thing to do in the business, I assure you. The lady is a patient of her visitor's, who is a doctor.—She is the wife of a country squire, and having, for some time past, taken it into her head to fancy herself very ill, her husband, whose life was rendered unhappy by her complaints, has dispatched her to town, in order to consult the London physicians.

ans. On her arrival here, she sent for one of the most eminent of them; who, after several visits, was so imprudent as to tell her, that if she had any disorder, he did not possess sufficient sagacity to discover it, but that it was his firm belief, she had no disorder at all; and advised her, if she wished to continue in her present excellent state of health, to quit London without delay, and return to the air and exercise of the country. Convinced of his ignorance, and offended at his impertinence, she presented him with a farewell fee, and immediately dispatched her servant for a Quack, whose advertisement she had that very morning read in the newspapers.

“ This scientific practitioner no sooner saw his patient, than, with a superiority of penetration, which the regular disciple of the college was so unfortunate as not to possess, he discovered, at a glance, a great variety of disorders, and accompanied his discovery with a positive promise that they

should all be very shortly removed.—This artful fellow sees her foible, and flatters it; gives her a few nauseous drugs, that can do her no harm, tells her the chit-chat of the town, amuses her every evening at her tea-table with nonsense and scandal, and receives a very handsome fee for his pains: while she mistakes the cunning of his conduct for a superior skill in his profession, which he will continue to exercise till he suspects her purse to be almost emptied; and he will then dismiss her to the country, in as good a state of health as when she left it.” “And which, considering his profession,” said Don Cleofas, “is saying a great deal in his favour. But is it not astonishing, that in this enlightened nation, empiricism should not only get bread, but wealth?”

“If there were not fools in all countries,” answered Asmodeus, “how could the knaves in them contrive to live? But you should reflect, at the same time, that
though

though quackery is always contemptible, the professors of it are frequently amusing.

"I must now, however," continued Asmodeus, "entreat you to condescend so far as to look into the kitchen apartment, where you will see the master and mistress chatting over a comfortable dish of tea. Their descent to the basement story, is a mark of their prosperity, for then all their lodgings are let; but you will, and with some reason, think it is a very great disgrace to the government of this country, that a brave officer, who has bled for it, should be reduced to connect prosperity with a circumstance that degrades him.—During the last war he performed wonders in the ship of which he was first lieutenant; but the honours he acquired were borne away from him by his captain, who was immediately advanced for that service, which was, in fact, performed by this neglected officer. Several years ago, he mar-

ried the daughter of a clergyman, who had been formerly his schoolmaster, and had left her in great distress ; and having got a few hundred pounds prize-money, they furnished the house in which you now see them ; and by letting it out in lodgings, they are enabled, with the pittance of his half-pay, to live with decency, and above want.—These good people have a son, a very promising boy, whom they have determined to put out as an apprentice to the trade of a shoemaker, in which industry and integrity will get him a fortune, instead of breeding him up in his father's profession, where the greatest merit generally passes without reward, if it cannot procure the favour of some powerful patron to protect and advance it."

" This is a melancholy consideration," said Don Cleofas ; " I am, however, called from the humane sympathy it occasions, by a very lovely woman in the adjoining house, who is surrounded with all the different

ferent purveyors of female elegance.—
What may be the particular occasion of
all this bustle of milliners, mantua-makers,
and perfumers, remains for you to explain,
for I do not at all understand either the
reason or the folly of it.”

“ She is a country lady,” answered Af-
modeus, and within a very short time, was
as amiable as she is handsome; but a me-
tamorphosis, as sudden, and almost as
strange, as any you have read in Ovid, has
taken place in every faculty of her mind.—
Her whole nature has undergone a very
singular change, and her dispositions have
taken a turn that will poison her happiness;
and, if her husband does not exert a degree
of resolution, which men cannot always
call forth, when the pleasure of a beloved
object is in question, she will reduce him
to inevitable ruin.

“ She is the wife of a country gentleman,
of a genteel fortune, in a distant county;

and about six weeks since accompanied him to town, on business which required his personal attendance. He loves her almost to idolatry, and she has, till this journey, conducted herself in such a manner as to deserve his ardent affection, and to ensure, if possible, an encrease of it.

"On her arrival in town, she contented herself with common amusements, and thought not of any thing more than the necessary expences of the capital : she was fearful of launching into any extravagance, and looked back, from time to time, with a wishful anxiety, to the rural beauties and tranquil comforts of her own home. But, as it were, in a moment, she was seized with the contagion of fashion ; elated by the consciousness of dignity, and hurried into all the folly, affectation, and expence of modish life.

"Her original idea of expence in this journey to town, was a moderate quantity
of

of new cloaths,—some little fashionable decorations,—a few trifling presents for her country friends—and the new painting of the post-chaise.—But how are these moderate intentions of prudence and good sense perverted!—Her apartment is filled, as you see, from morning till night, with mercers, mantua-makers, and milliners; she has hired a French-maid,—ordered a new post-coach,—given directions for elegant liveries,—and has sent an express command into the country to have the family pew, in the parish church, fitted up with every decoration of which it is susceptible. In short, her mind is occupied, at present, with nothing but finery and parade. The post-chaise and pair, which brought her and her husband to town, will convey her servants into the country;—she will precede it in her new coach and four, and exults in the expectation of astonishing the neighbourhood with her unexpected splendour. But her new-fangled ambition has still other objects; for instead

of practising those duties, and exercising that demeanour which have rendered her life happy, and made her character beloved, she glories in the design she has formed of introducing folly, fashion and luxury, into the circle of her provincial acquaintance.

“ But, as every effect must proceed from some cause, be it what it may, you will very naturally enquire from what strange, fascinating circumstance this transformation has proceeded; it is a very simple one indeed;—but so it is:—the lady’s husband came up to town to present an address of his county to the King, and has had the misfortune to be dubbed a Knight.”

“ In the very next house,” said Don Cleofas; “ I observe a gentleman who seems to possess a similar disposition; and if one may judge from the quantity of trunks and other packages with which his apartment is occupied, he may be supposed
to

to have been preparing himself to make a figure also in the country."

"The country which he is about to visit," answered Asmodeus, "will require a six months voyage to take him to it.—He is a younger brother of a good family, who, among other elegant propensities, has been much attached to the gaming table: however, he was, but a few months since, such a favourite of fortune, as, in a very short time, to have won so large a sum as seventy thousand pounds.

"At this moment his best friends interfered,—advised him in the most earnest manner to bid adieu to gaming society, and not to risque the affluence he had gained by any future hazard,—but to make it the source of elegant establishment and real comfort:—His evil genius, however, resisted their counsels, and he resolved to continue play, and follow up his good fortune till his gains amounted to one hundred thousand

thousand pounds : but in putting this infatuated resolution into practice, he lost all he had already won, and became involved, into the bargain, for more than he was able to pay. His friends, therefore, have exerted their last efforts in fitting him out for the East-Indies, and he will depart to-morrow, with a determined resolution to return with a fortune superior to that which he has won and lost—or to return no more.”

“ Every additional information I receive from you, on the score of gaming,” said Don Cleofas, “ tends to confirm me in the opinion, that it is the worst of human vices.—But no more of that :—My attention is already transferred to a young lady in an apartment beautifully adorned with prints, a little to the right of us. She rests her elbow on the table, and her face on her hand, and has the air of extreme dejection :—I hope, however, it does not proceed from any misfortune of
her

her own, but from some tale of tender fiction, which her companion is reading to her."

"They are two unmarried sisters of high rank," said the Demon, "who live together; and I am really concerned that I cannot gratify your humanity by the information that her distress arises from any sympathy with real or fictitious sorrow.—It is, alas, all her own; for the unhappy lady has been for some time afflicted with a dropsy, which is daily encreasing upon her. But do not be alarmed, my good friend; a few weeks retirement in the country, and a skilful midwife, will rid her of the disorder.

"In the next house, you must observe a company of fashionable women, who are wrapped in the most anxious attention to the discourse of a gentleman dressed in all the glitter of fashionable elegance; and from the regard with which he appears to be

be favoured by his fair audience," answered Don Cleofas, "I should suppose that his conversation is as finely embroidered as his cloaths." "He is," replied the Demon, "a vain, silly coxcomb, of some fortune, whose whole merit consists in an elegant appearance, and whose whole knowledge is limited to the chit-chat of the day. He is now communicating some unpleasant reports of a very intimate female friend of the company, which he himself believes to be false, and for relating which he ought to be kicked out of it. But so it is;—for such an open ear have some people for scandal, that they will hear an impertinent jackanapes prate upon that subject for an hour together with patience, whose mouth they would most willingly padlock upon any other.

"In the upper story of the house adjoining, is a man of a very different character, and whose lot in life is of that nature, to furnish a certain species of philosophy

phy with arguments against the only source of solid happiness to mortal beings, the belief in an over-ruling providence: but though formed for deeds of enmity to mankind, I am too sincere a friend to you, not to endeavour to guard you against those errors in which I would willingly involve the rest of the human race.

“ This gentleman was the son of an officer in the army, who fell in the field of battle, and left this boy, whose mother had died two years before, to the care of an elder brother, whose great object in life had been to raise a moderate estate by continual care and honest parsimony, into a large one. The uncle, who had never been married, and was a man of a singular character, brought him up as his own son, and had made him the heir of his fortune.

“ The youth grew up the admiration of all who knew him, for his amiable manners, as well as his uncommon attainments ;
but,

but, unluckily for him, he possessed also a friendly heart, and a sympathising spirit; for having borrowed a few guineas of his uncle's house-keeper, to make up the sum of twenty pounds, in order to relieve one of his intimate acquaintance from a ruinous embarrassment; the poor woman, to please her master, as she thought, with this example of his nephew's goodness, related the circumstance to him. But the consequences of this humane information, turned out very different indeed from what the poor woman looked for, or any humane person would expect;—for the old gentleman became outrageous on the occasion—accused her of caballing with his nephew against him—reprobated his conduct in the most unjust terms—and having dismissed her from his service, he immediately altered his will, and left his estates to a distant, an unexpected, and unworthy relation: so that when he died shortly after, the young man, instead of that affluence to which he had been educated, found the whole of his
fortune

fortune to consist of a legacy of five hundred pounds, and an annuity of fifty pounds a year.

“ The disappointment he suffered on the occasion, disqualified him from attempting any active profession; he, therefore, after remaining some time at the university in a state of studious solitude, took orders, and retired to bury his superior talents and qualifications in the curacy of a country village.—He lately came up to town, to solicit a vacant living, the patronage of which was annexed to that estate which had been bequeathed from him; and with a degree of cruelty for which the indignation of justice cannot find a name, this reasonable solicitation was peremptorily refused. He is, at present, consoling himself for the injustice he has received, by writing a sermon on charity, which he is engaged to preach in behalf of a public institution on next Sunday; when his Christian excellence will obtain that good for others,

others, which will make him some amends for the having succeeded so ill in procuring it for himself."

"This seems to be an house of students," said Don Cleofas; "for, in the apartment beneath, there is another gentleman deeply engaged in some literary pursuit; but whatever may be his propensities to study, his exterior appearance marks rather the man of pleasure than the philosopher. Not that I can discover any reason why a man of learning may not also be a man of fashion."

"These are the very characters," answered the Demon, "which this gentleman wishes to unite; and though he has talents equal to the attainment of his object, he is too idle to take the pains necessary to his purpose. His application to books is like his application to dress;—he applies to his taylor, when he wants new cloaths; and

and he has recourse to his library, when he wants new thoughts.

“ He is going to a supper, where he will meet with some very clever people; and, as a reformation in the slave-trade is a subject that, at this time, very much engages the attention of the public, he very naturally concludes that it will become a topic of the evening’s conversation; he is, therefore, preparing himself for a little occasional display, by reading that part of the history of Jamaica which describes the circumstances of negroes in that island; so that he will be qualified to speak with some degree of information on the subject; and may, perhaps, gain the credit of possessing a superior knowledge of a matter of which he knows nothing, but what he is now getting by rote for the occasion. But this is by no means an uncommon trick; and many have acquired the character of general knowledge, by their precaution in never delivering their particular sentiments on
any

any subject for which they have not prepared themselves. Indeed, among these occasional readers, even men of celebrity might be named, whose reputation is founded on the belief that the labour of study has been the occupation of their lives."

"I beg your pardon," said the Count, "but my attention has been for some time engaged with two beautiful young women, who are playing at cards with an elderly gentleman; and, from what I see of the business, I would not give him the smallest piece of coin in this country, for all his winnings of the evening."

"You are greatly mistaken," answered the Demon; "the party is not engaged in play for money, or even for their amusement, but for their instruction. The young ladies, on the contrary, are receiving lessons from a master, in the different games at cards now in fashion, and by the particular

cular desire of their father ; who thinks very sensibly, that since young persons of their situation in life, cannot always avoid play, it is by no means improper that they should be so far acquainted with this branch of fashionable amusement, as to secure them from having their pockets picked, when they may be obliged to engage in it."

" This is a part of female education," said Don Cleofas, " of which I profess myself to have been entirely ignorant.—But in a great city like this, and in such an age of dissipation as the present, I can readily conceive its importance.—But do, I beg of you, explain to me the conduct of a gentleman, who seems to be most anxiously engaged in destroying a very large picture : the knife, the scissars, and the fire, appear to have an equal share in the destruction of this offensive canvas." " It is very offensive indeed," answered Asmodeus, " for it is the work of his own pencil ; which, from a vanity equally absurd
and

and disgraceful, he wishes to forget he ever employed.

“He was, some years ago, a painter of eminence, and having worked himself into the good graces of a very wealthy widow, whom he married, he is become so ashamed of the art by which he once got his bread, that he will give any price for pictures of his own painting, with no other view than to destroy them, and thereby lessen the traces of a profession, the memory of which he considers as dishonourable to him.

“But we will now,” said the Demon, “change our situation :” and he had no sooner made the proposal, than the Count found himself seated perfectly at his ease, and by the side of his conductor, in the cupola of a fashionable chapel.

“This is a place of public worship,” continued Asmodeus, “where people of fashion

fashion subscribe for pews, as they do for boxes at the Opera, but where they are not, perhaps, so regular in their attendance. There are many of these places of trafficking devotion in this quarter of the town. But, in order to explain myself, I must inform you that several parishes have become too populous for their churches, so that it has been absolutely necessary to erect convenient chapels for the supernumerary inhabitants; and this has been generally done by private individuals, on a principle of trading speculation.—The sacred edifice on which we are sitting, is the property of three people,—a wine-merchant, a builder, and a parson,—The first purchased the materials,—the second found the labour,—and the third performs the duty:—The wine-merchant, for his share, takes the vaults, where he deposits his liquors; while the builder and the parson share the rentage of the pews between them:—All three find the undertaking to answer extremely well, and do not hesi-

tate to mention it as a very profitable job." "I cannot but observe," said Don Cleofas, smiling, "that you seem to triumph in a circumstance which lessens the dignity of religion." "By no means," answered the Demon; "for the love of gain is perhaps, in another way, as prevalent in a metropolitan church, as in one of these provisional chapels; and you may be assured that the interests of our confraternity are attacked, with equal success, in the one as in the other.

"But such considerations as these, are not of sufficient importance to arrest your attention from the gay party in the house opposite to us." "It is very true," said the Count; "and a very fine woman, who is lolling on a sofa, and rallying with great spirit the young men about her, had already attracted my notice:—she appears to have passed the bloom of youth, but still has charms sufficient, I should imagine, to retain a considerable suite of admirers." "She is a singular character," replied

replied Asmodeus, "and her history will amply reward your patience in attending to it.

"*Paulina* is well born and well bred; was very handsome and very accomplished; her vivacity pleased, and her manners charmed: but *Paulina* had an ear very open to flattery, and was vain enough to let any thing flatter her. The instructions of her mother had never been neglected; and while she was easy with all, and would coquette with any, she was determined never to give her hand, unless she received a coronet in return.—As for her heart,—that she was determined to keep to herself.

"Adorned as she was by nature, and qualified by education, it cannot be supposed that she could remain long without a conquest; and a young man of fortune and fashion soon became her slave. He returned from his travels at the lat-

ter end of that winter in which Paulina first made her appearance in the circles of fashionable life.

“ *Hortensius* was every thing a woman of sense could wish to possess in an husband. To a very enlarged understanding, he joined the most polished manners : all the fruits of a superior education were ripened in him, and he returned from the completion of it with all those advantages which foreign travel is calculated to bestow, and without any of the nonsense, folly, or vices which too often associate themselves with it. He was rich, and his estate was not very distant from that of Paulina’s brother, where she had been invited to pass the approaching summer.

“ Though he was very deeply enamoured of this lively beauty, *Hortensius* was not deprived by his passion of that sober reflection which led him to consider marriage as an engagement that ought not to be entered

entered into without some degree of precaution, however amiable the object of his affection might appear; and as he had only seen Paulina since his return to England, in the gay scenes and fashionable societies of the metropolis, where all is glitter and deception, he resolved to defer the declaration of his passion till he had made a further discovery of her character, in the tranquillity of a country residence.

“ His vicinity to her gave him every opportunity he could desire; and the intimacy which had long subsisted between the two families, was eagerly renewed on his taking possession of the estate of his ancestors.—On this occasion he gave several elegant entertainments, at which Paulina always presided. But, however flattered she might be with his attentions, as she had never thought of him for an husband, it did not enter into her mind that he had ever thought of her for a wife; while her easy, good-humoured manner of

conducting herself towards him, which arose from this circumstance, was so far interpreted by him as a prepossession in his favour, that he determined to make immediate proposals of marriage to her, which he flattered himself would be accepted without the least hesitation.

“ Paulina had so little expectation or desire of such an intention on his part, that when he made the declaration, on the success of which, he assured her, the happiness of his future life depended, she treated it as an agreeable, gallant *badinage*; called him her shepherd, and employed such a lively flow of ridicule on the business, as disqualified him from renewing his pretensions; so that, in order to save himself from the disgrace of having been refused by the lady, he was obliged to follow her example, and to declare that the solemn proposal he had made to her, was nothing more than a folly of animal spirits,

rits, for the purpose of their mutual amusement.

“The pride, as well as the sensibility of Hortensius, received, however, a very mortifying wound; he loved the frolic fair one,—and enjoying no pleasure in his native groves, since the divinity he adored refused to inhabit them, he returned to town; but finding that her idea continued to haunt him there, he made another visit to the continent, with a full determination to remain abroad till his unfortunate passion was extinguished.

“It was not possible that such a woman as Paulina should be without a train of admirers, even in the country; and various proposals of marriage succeeded each other; but, as none of them were accompanied with a coronet, she treated them all as she had done that of Hortensius;—and being convinced, in her own mind, from the number of her rural lovers, that

her triumphs, in the succeeding winter, would be equal to any that had been known in the annals of beauty ; she was determined to wait till that period, to make her choice from the numerous titles which would then solicit her acceptance. Her brother, indeed, had engaged to use his influence in behalf of a young enamoured baronet, of antient family and large fortune ; but he could obtain no other answer from her, than that, if she lived to be thirty, without possessing a coronet, she might then perhaps, look with some degree of complacency on a *bloody band*.

“ At length the winter came, and the offer of a coronet along with it, which met with an unhesitating and cordial acceptance:—Nor did Paulina reflect, for a moment, that the hand which presented it, was part of a frame emaciated by those diseases which are the fruits of intemperance, and which contained a heart long since

since corrupted by the habits of a vicious life.

“ But she was not destined to be a Countess:—Death stepped in between her and her wedding-day;—and instead of the nuptial bed, her lover took possession of his family sepulchre. This event, however, was so far from throwing a damp upon her spirits, that it seemed to give them new animation; and she returned the condolence of her friends with wishing that the poor Lord had lived a fortnight longer, to have left her a titled widow: though, after all, she would add, fate had been kind enough to prevent her from being a Countess, in order, at length, to make her a Duchess.

“ All this Paulina imagined very clever—and so it might be; but such a want of feeling and decorum, convinced all who knew her, that however calculated she might be for the charming companion of

an hour, she was essentially deficient in those qualifications which can alone render a woman a charming companion for life. The consequence of this opinion was, that though the young men of fashion flocked about her, and dangled after her, to be amused by the lively fallies of her conversation, no more offers of marriage were made, which her pride would suffer her to accept; and Paulina has passed on through many a succeeding winter, always having a visionary coronet dancing before her,—but never obtaining a real one.

“ She has, however, at length attained that period when her condescending ambition had declared she might, perhaps, accept a Baronet’s proposals without derision; but that trial has not yet been made, and Paulina’s next birth-day will announce the thirty-first year of her life. The vivacity of her temper still supports her, and she continually declares her resolution not *to die an old maid*; and from some circumstances

stances that happened, in an unlucky melting moment, last summer in the country, which cannot very well be related,—if Paulina were to die to night—Paulina *would keep her word.*

“The vivacity of this lively fair one’s temper,” said the Count, “is finely contrasted by the appearance and widowed habit of the lady in the next house. She might really fit to a painter for the figure of Melancholy. I do not indeed see a tear upon her cheek, but she seems so absorbed in sorrow, as to be quite insensible to the charming notes produced by her companion, who is endeavouring to amuse her with the most pleasing music I have ever heard. A young widow who was fond of her husband, is, at least during her first weeds, an object of real pity.”

“I cannot but compliment your Lordship,” said Asmodeus, “on that little pleasant sally of severity:—The lady, however,

ever, is a chaste virgin; and her widowhood, for so indeed she considers her present situation, is a sentimental whim of her own. She is a very amiable and accomplished woman, and is engaged to be married to a curious man of large fortune; who, previous to his nuptials, has thought proper to make a voyage round the world, on discoveries in navigation and natural history.—He has been gone near two years, and the ship in which he sailed, has not been heard off for so long a time, that it is universally believed to be lost. In consequence of this general opinion, she has clad herself, as you see, in the deepest mourning, and bewails, with a widow's lamentation, the loss of her lover, whom she imagines to be sleeping in a watery grave of the other hemisphere. And, to say the truth, it would be happier for her, if fate had so disposed of him:—She might then have continued to grieve with the soothing tenderness of a faithful affection; whereas she will shortly be doomed to mourn in the
bit-

bitterness of unmerited mortification;—for he will return home, in a few weeks, alive and well; and, forgetful of his plighted vows, will immediately make his addresses to another lady.

“Look, I beg of you,” continued Afmodeus, “into the parlour of the house adjoining, and you will see another exhibition of female sorrow.” “The young lady, however,” said Don Cleofas, “does not afford us a very striking example of patient grief;—she seems rather to be expressing herself to her female companion with all the resentment arising from a recent injury.” “It is even so,” answered the Demon; “she has been for some time addressed by a very sensible young man, to whom she had made an unresisting surrender of her affections; but happening, a few days ago, to treat her father and mother with somewhat of acrimonious vivacity in the presence of her lover, he took it into his head to imagine, that an undu-
tiful

tiful daughter would prove a termagant wife ; and therefore, without further ceremony, or any notice whatever to the lady, he set out the following day, to pay a visit in a distant part of Yorkshire.—Her elder sister is, at the same time, consoling her on her disappointment,—and rejoicing at it.

‘ But cast your eye a little further, and you will witness another scene of matrimonial disappointment, but of a very different and curious description.—The gentleman whom you see sitting before the fire, with a letter in his hand, and laughing as he peruses it, is a worthy but singular character. He employs a considerable fortune in doing a great deal of good in an uncommon manner. The usual ways of proceeding have no satisfaction for him. Hence it is, that his constant wish to establish himself in domestic life, though he has attained his thirty-fifth year, has never been gratified. The ordinary conduct of others towards him, or the extraordinary

ordinary conduct of himself towards others, have hitherto kept him in the uncheery solitude of an unmarried state.

“ It was, however, no longer ago than yesterday, that, on reading the newspaper, during his breakfast, he observed an article in the benefactions to the Society established for the payment of Small Debts, which marked the charitable donation of fifty pounds from *a young lady unknown*.—The idea of this humane *incognita* struck forcibly on his fancy; and, by a very rapid transition, commanded an interest in his heart. He thought that such a person was exactly the character which he had been so long searching after; and to obtain a wife in such a singular manner, was, of all things, the most congenial to his disposition. He, therefore, began immediately, for he is very much in the habit of talking to himself, to soliloquise in the following manner:”

“ This

‘ This sudden prepossession of mine, for
‘ an object I have never seen, may be con-
‘ sidered as singular by some, and even ri-
‘ diculous by others ; but I am neverthe-
‘ less convinced, that it is by no means un-
‘ natural. Love at first sight, is a very
‘ common circumstance : and if it is ac-
‘ knowledged, which, indeed, cannot be
‘ denied, that a man may become enam-
‘ oured of a woman from beholding her
‘ person, without being in the least ac-
‘ quainted with her character ;—why may
‘ he not be affected in the same manner,
‘ by knowing her character, without ever
‘ having beheld her person?— I may,
‘ therefore, be said to have fallen in love
‘ with a lady at first sight,—that is to say,
‘ at the first sight of her character, as
‘ pourtrayed in a single line of the paper
‘ before me.

‘ In the first place, she is represented to
‘ be young, which is a very desirable cir-
‘ cumstance in any woman. Secondly,
her

‘ her humanity is evident, from her donation of fifty pounds to a charity, whose individual contributions seldom amount to more than a very few guineas. And, thirdly, she proves her mind to be superior to all ostentation or idle vanity, by not suffering herself to be known, and disdaining the silly parade of having her name inserted in a public list of what are called *charitable* benefactors.— My conclusion, therefore, is not only logical but natural; that a lady who is young, humane, and without vanity, is certainly an object formed to inspire the purest love, and qualified to bestow that happiness with which it is has long been my most anxious wish to crown my life.

‘ She may not be handsome;—but what of that?—She may not possess that glare of beauty which is calculated to inspire an instant passion;—but she is most assuredly the mistress of those qualities which will create and cement a solid
‘ affection

‘ affection. What is mere personal beauty, but a gaudy flower, that is worn for a few hours, and is thought of no more. In the moment of gratification, it has often been known to satiate ;—and how often does he who possesses it, leave its unavailing charms to be admired by others. The beauties of the mind have a very different and superior influence ; they maintain a firm possession of the heart they have gained,—till it becomes a clod of the valley.

‘ But even if I take the liberty to suppose that the unknown lady is not adorned with a superiority of external charms, I may venture to determine, at the same time, on the impossibility of her being ugly or unpleasing.—The smiles that are occasioned by a benignant heart, as well as the wishes and sentiments that proceed from it, must give a winning and irresistible charm to any kind or arrangement of features.—Every one has
‘ expe-

“experienced how soon any little exterior
“imperfections wear away, and in how
“short a time they are no longer perceived;
“when sweetness of disposition, excellence
“of heart, and an enlarged understanding,
“turn the attention from them. At all
“events, I would engage to marry this
“young, unknown, benevolent woman, be
“she what she may, as to personal appear-
“ance; and would most readily consent
“not to see her face, if it could be so con-
“trived, till we had retired from the altar.”

“Thus did this curious gentleman
harangue himself into a determination to
get a wife, if possible, from the tablet of
benefactions to a charitable institution;—
nor did he lose a moment in employing an
active agent to discover the unknown idol
of his affections.—The search was not made
in vain; and the letter which he is now
reading, and at the contents whereof you
may hear him laughing, has just informed
him, that *the young unknown lady*, who
gave

gave the donation of *fifty pounds*, is very well known to be an old maid of *fifty years of age*."

"And I can join most heartily in the laugh with him," said the Count; "but disappointment does not, I trust, infect the whole quarter:—There appears to be, at least, one party within my observation, who, as far as I am capable of judging, may bid defiance to it. That fond young couple of lovers, in the apartment hung with blue, I should hope, may be permitted to attain the consummation of their wishes."

"Your wish in their favour," answered the Demon, "will most assuredly be gratified; their nuptials, will meet with no obstacle,—for a few guineas have already arranged them."

"It is the profession of that lady to get, if she can, an husband every night of her life;—nay, I believe it is not beyond the power of my art, to procure your Lordship

ship

ship a very favourable reception in that character. The smart young man who is now with her, is one of her reigning favourites, because he is one of the most generous of her admirers. He is a Quaker, whose father is a very opulent merchant, and a leading member of that persuasion; his mother is also a celebrated preacher of it:—But the son possessing a genius very ill suited to professional restraint, either temporal or spiritual; yet, at the same time, being unwilling to be the cause of scandal in his family, has a convenient apartment at this end of the town, whither he resorts, as opportunity offers, to transform himself into the figure of a gay man of fashion.—He then appears in the circles of pleasure, or visits some amiable Dulcinea; and at the shrine of such a yielding fair one, he devotes the hours of the present evening.—But his pleasurable disguise is not of long duration; for, at an early hour of to-morrow, he will disrobe himself of all his frippery, and return to his

his father's counting-house in all the primitive simplicity of the sect to which he belongs.

“ In the large house to the left of us, you must see a very fine woman superbly dressed, who is bestriding the drawing room with that precipitate step which marks an agitated mind. She is preparing for a second voyage of matrimony : her agitation, however, does not arise from any apprehension that it can be interrupted or will not be prosperous.—But to introduce the cause of her present emotions, I shall give you the history of her life.

“ It surprised all the fashionable world, when *Matilda*, who had been educated in the luxury of a great fortune, and had refused the offers of wealth and titles, ran away with a country curate.

“ The money raised by the sale of a few jewels, and five hundred pounds left her by an aunt, supported the happy couple

ple for near two years, in tolerable comfort; but at the moment when Matilda was brought to bed of her second child, she found herself reduced to love, a cottage, and sixty pounds a year. She now, for the first time, applied to her father; but he was inexorable, and seemed rather to triumph in her distress, than to encourage any hopes that he would ever condescend to relieve it.

“ After starving for two years on this miserable income, a gentleman, who had been one of her former lovers, most kindly, and without any application on her part, presented her husband to a very considerable living.

“ Matilda and her husband were now advanced to a state of comfortable competence; and three lovely children had been added to their family, when, on the death of her father, she was invited to be present at the opening of his will. She
would

would, however, have saved herself no small portion of mortification if she had stayed at home; for the will did not contain her name. It had been made by her father in the first moments of his resentment against her, and bequeathed the whole of his fortune to her brother; who, with a true fraternal kindness, on presenting his sister with a bank-note of an hundred pounds, to supply herself and her family with mourning,—did not hesitate to declare that this was the last time he hoped to see or hear of her. She was not in a situation to throw the ungracious present in his face, but immediately returned home, to be consoled by the tender affection of her husband, and the fond endearments of her children.

“ At the end of another three years, and after she had brought another child into the world, her husband caught a violent cold, by baptising his own infant in a damp surplice. This indisposition being neglected,

neglected, grew into a violent fever, which occasioned his death; so that she became a widow, without fortune, without friends, and with six children.

“Matilda and her brother had been, ever since her father’s death, in a state of inveterate variance, which prevented her from indulging a momentary thought of making any application to him. With a resolution, therefore, that did her great honour, she determined to sell all the little property her husband had left behind him, and with the produce of it, to take an house in a neighbouring market-town, where she proposed to enter on some sort of business, that might enable her to support herself, and bring up her children in humble decency and comfort.

“She had, however, all the merit resulting from such a virtuous resolution, without the pain of putting it to the trial.

For, as she was sitting one evening alone in her husband's study, ruminating with an anxious and afflicted mind, on the little plan she had formed, a messenger arrived with an account that her brother had broke his neck in a fox-chace, and a request from his steward, to be present at the opening of another will.

“Matilda had no great reason to expect any testamentary benefit on the occasion. However, she thought it right to obey the summons; and on her arrival, once more, at the seat of her ancestors, she was surprised to find it her own: for it proved that her brother had died intestate, and, of course, all his fortune devolved upon her.—When she was informed of this very unexpected event, a melancholy idea rested, for a few moments, on the memory of her husband, which was succeeded by a consolatory reflection on her six children; but this sudden accession of prosperity overpowered her spirits, and she fainted
in

‘ three thousand pounds a-year, and on the
‘ point of becoming a peeress of the
‘ realm. Well,’ said Matilda, rising from
her seat, and taking that active sweep
across the room which you have just seen,
‘ the most unpardonable folly of the hu-
‘ man mind is, *to despair.*’

“ I should almost imagine,” said the
Count, “ that you related this fair lady’s
contempt of despair, in order to heighten
my surprise at the real appearance of it,—
for surely nothing less could form the
strange spectacle which I now look up
with a mixture of horror and astonishment.

‘ My present attention is fixed on a
room hung with black, while the faint
light of glimmering tapers discovers to
my view a female figure, robed in the fa-
ble garb of woeful widowhood, and lean-
ing on a table, with an air of the deepest
dejection. There really wants nothing
but a scull, a pair of bones and an hour-
glass,

glafs, to give her apartment all the difmal appearance of a living fepulchre."

"This theatrical exhibition, for it deferves no other name," answered the Demon; "is of a very curious nature, and affords a very high-wrought example of that art which women have fo often employed to dupe the affections of the other fex.

"The actrefs of the fcene was firft made known to the world as a public finger of great professional merit; from which fituation fhe was taken to be the miftrefs of a very amiable and accomplished nobleman, whole attachment to her became fo ferious, as to occafion no fmall apprehenfions among his friends, that it might produce an union of an indiffoluble nature. To turn him afide, therefore, from a connexion which might be attended with fuch difgraceful confequences, they employed all their influence to promote

his marriage with a beautiful young lady of very great fortune; and they, at length, prevailed on him to make his proposals to her. They have been accepted,—and preparations are now making for the solemnization of the nuptials.

“ His Lordship being unwilling to suffer the pain of a personal declaration of his new arrangements to his mistress, a friend was commissioned, on his part, to inform her of them; and to present her, at the same time, with the settlement of a very ample provision during her life.—The fears, fits, and faintings which took place on the occasion, are not worthy a relation:—they were things too much of course, to be attended with any consequential effect. No one could be more sensible of their inefficacy than herself:—She therefore meditated a much deeper game; and accordingly wrote a letter to her late noble paramour, to congratulate him on an event which was so suitable to his dignity
and

and honour,—to beg his acceptance of her most cordial wishes for his perfect happiness,—to hint at the willing sacrifice she made of every thing that was dear to her, and to implore, as her last request, and before he threw her from his heart for ever, to favour her with an interview of a few minutes.

“ His affection, which he was endeavouring to lose in the advantages and honour of his new engagement, could not resist this affecting entreaty; and he has appointed this evening to gratify her request. The preparations which are made for his reception, are now beneath your eye. He will, within this hour, be introduced into this unexpected scene;—he will there be told, that in this mournful and dismal abode she means to pass the very short time her sorrows will suffer her to live: In short, she will so work upon his feelings, and give such a powerful reanimation to his affections, that he will, without

hesitation or delay, break off his intended marriage, and return to live with the Circe that has fascinated him, during the rest of his days."

"My suspicion might not, perhaps, be very ill-founded," replied the Count, "if I attributed all this curious business to the management of a respectable personage, to whom I am so much indebted for the discovery of it." "You are, in truth, very much mistaken," answered Asmodeus; "if I had been ordered to interfere in the affairs of these good people, the winding-up of the piece would not have been even so satisfactory to you, as that which now, I perceive, is favoured with your disapprobation. The noble Lord would then have acted a more foolish, because a more dishonourable part. I would have made him marry the lady, keep the mistress, and spend the fortune of the former, in indulging the follies of the latter."—"That, indeed," said the Count, "would have

have been an improvement of the business which did not occur to me. But I must beg the favour of you to follow my curiosity to the female *tête à tête* in the upper part of the white house to the left of us."

"Those two young ladies," said Asmodeus, "are sisters, but their characters are so very opposite, that you will scarcely believe they were formed in the same mould, or possess the same nature. They afford an indubitable proof of the different shapes which the human character is capable of receiving, to disgust and to charm.

"The eldest of them, whom you see embellished with all the decoration of dress, and lolling in one chair, with her feet thrown up into another, is named *Lucilla*. She has attained her twentieth year; but, though adorned with beauty, and accomplished by all the powers of education, she has never yet made a friend.

She has had admirers—she has had lovers—nay, she will shortly have an husband—but she will never have a friend. She may please from the charms of her person, or the capricious exertion of her exterior qualifications; but the pleasure she affords is, at best, as transitory as her appearance, and leaves no impression of delight behind it.

“If you should feel somewhat of surprise, that beauty, heightened by accomplishments, should fail of conciliating esteem, I must assure you, that without the harmonious composition of the mental elements, which produces what is called *good temper*,—beauty is a gaudy, unscented flower, scarce worth the plucking, but, by no means, worth the wearing; and all the embellishments of education, are like so many brilliants set round a common pebble, whose lustre serves only to expose the deformity of the object which they were designed to adorn.

“This

“ This *benignity of temper*, which is the basis of every solid power of pleasing, is not to be found in Lucilla’s breast. She cannot charm, therefore, beyond the moment, when her pride condescends to demand adulation. As a child, she was forward, peevish and petulant ;—as a woman, she is proud, violent and unforgiving.—Her commands are given with haughtiness,—delays in obeying are chid with passion, and disobedience is punished with unrelenting persecution. Her inferiors find her tyrannical,—her equals are never favoured with confidence,—while her superiors are treated with an unwilling homage. It was but yesterday that her maid offended her, and as she would not condescend to forfeit her word, in withholding a gown she had promised her, she wore it once more, to have the revenge of purposely throwing her ink-stand over it, in order that it might be of no service to the offending Abigail.

“Sensible that the forms of good-breeding must not be violated, she vents her anger against any one who has displeased her, by interlarding her conversation with those secret strokes of satire and pointed allusions, which, while they cannot be noticed, are almost always felt. There is a mode of being uncivil, without infringing on the rules of politeness; and in this qualification she is an arrant adept. She will sometimes indeed, venture to be agreeable, pleasant and familiar; but it is, perhaps, to surprise you the next time you see her, with a behaviour of distance and reserve. She knows how to assent, as if she did not believe a word you say; and if you commit a mistake, or blunder upon an inaccuracy, you may be assured that she will take some elegant method of letting you know that the circumstance has not escaped her observation. She has reduced the art of inattention to a perfect system, and by combining it with awkward apologies, or fulsome compliment, can apply it without

out apparent offence to the purposes of secret mortification. She is equally qualified how to distress by loquacious praise or frigid silence. In short, she is completely skilled in all the refinements of ill-temper; and possessing beauty, accomplishments and talents, she possesses the most powerful means of reducing them to practice.

“ But as ill-tempered people must be unhappy, I need not add that she is miserable; the pleasure of revenge and malice is of very short duration, and leaves a rankling smart behind it. Lucilla, with all her skill, cannot baffle the recoiling mortification. She sometimes finds it necessary, by granting compliances, to make atonement for wanton wit and forward sarcasms. But the bitter reflections which proceed from such circumstances, instead of producing a cure, promote the disorder; they only serve to encrease her spleen—to

animate her rancour—and quicken her projects of future malice.

“As for her lover, she is continually doing something or other to make him uneasy, and will then assume the most lively gaiety to encrease his vexation. She will sing and dance, to the fatigue of her own spirits, in order to depress his ; and should he do, or not do any thing which she chuses to construe into neglect, he is sure of being punished by the most pointed indifference to him, and the most agreeable attentions to every one besides. When, after having well tormented herself with a variety of forced exertions to torment him, she detests him for the vexation she feels on the occasion ; and it does not always happen that a night’s repose evaporates her spleen, or brings her even to tolerable good-humour in the morning.

“This poor, infatuated young man, however, fancies all the while, that these
airs

airs and humours are the pardonable coquetries of the mistress, which will soon be lost in the duties of the wife. He, alas! does not perceive that this unpleasant conduct is, as it were, a part of herself,—that Hymen will not change her nature, and that she will bear to his arms all those wretched dispositions, for which the possession of her charms, the occasional gleams of her good-humour, and those affected soothings, which may sometimes be put on for whole days together, in order to gain some point of interest or vanity, will but ill compensate.

“It is, however,” continued Asmodeus, “high time to relieve you from contemplating this unpleasing picture of a malevolent beauty, to direct your attention to the other sister; who, dressed with simple elegance, is embroidering on the other side of the fire-place, and in whose character every virtue quickens into luxuriance.

“*Amanda*

“*Amanda* is one year younger than her sister—and very much her inferior in all the external charms of nature. She has no claim to beauty of person; but, at the same time, wears a form which is susceptible of grace, and a countenance which, without possessing any striking feature, produces a most agreeable result to the beholder. There is nothing in her appearance to captivate the gazing eye at a first glance; but, when once examined, she is never more passed with inattention. But were the exterior charms of her person all that fancy ever feigned, they would not excel the interior beauties of her mind.

“The object of *Amanda*’s life is to please, from those motives which alone can afford any lasting or solid pleasures.—It is not to triumph during the short reign of youth and beauty;—it is not to exult over wounded hearts or despairing rivals;—but from a desire of communicating happiness to all whom it may be in her power

to influence for the purpose of attaining it. The same principle regulates her manners—disposes her toilette—inspires her charity—awakens her smiles, or distills her tears.—To see others pleased and happy, is to herself pleasure and happiness. Indeed, this spirit is so diffused through her character, that if there should be an offensive particle in it, the diminutive evil is rendered inactive by the power of her philanthropic virtues. She thinks no offices of kindness beneath her duty, and no condition too low for the employment of them. As for the domestic servants, they may be said to adore, rather than to love her.

“ Though her attentions are universal to all who frequent her family, she knows how to distinguish between the friend and the acquaintance, by those little secret touches of behaviour, which are felt by the former, and cannot be observed by the latter. She studies the characters of those who compose her society, that she may be qualified

lified to call forth the characteristic excellence of each individual, and adapt their particular dispositions to each other. Thus every body finds a real pleasure in her company, from no other cause than the skill she employs,—by avoiding, or giving an happy turn to whatever might pique, perplex or offend,—to make her company satisfied with themselves. Her father declares to every one he sees, that the pains of a rooted disease are mitigated, and the languor of declining life cheared by her attentions :—An old and a fractious maiden aunt cannot indulge her spleen against Amanda ;—and the haughty, envious, ill-tempered Lucilla finds, in the submissive, assiduous, and patient demeanour of her younger sister, the only subject of her sincere praise. She has frequently been heard to say, that there is not such a girl in the world as Amanda."

"But how has it happened, my good friend," said the Count, with a tone and look

look of astonishment, "that a woman possessing so much excellence, and such a power of pleasing, should not be exerting all her superior qualities as a wife and a mother?—I should imagine that Hymen would have prepared an altar in his temple for her alone."

"That she is unmarried," answered Amodeus, "is a matter of her own choice. She has had some offers, which she did not think proper to accept; as certain essential qualities, in her opinion, were wanting on the side of the proposing parties. Besides, the beauty of her eldest sister has hitherto carried every thing before it; while the amiable and unfashionable humility of Amanda, has kept her, as it were, in the back-ground of the picture. But this is not all:—Her heart is not without its favourite,—and her partiality is directed to one who well deserves the treasure he possesses. Fortune, however, has hitherto forbid their union.

"This

"This untoward circumstance, and the uneasiness arising in her family from the temper and conduct of her sister, oppress her, at times, with very painful sensations; but she knows how to keep them to her closet and herself. Her smiles are for others, and her tears are for the solitary reflections of her own bosom. Her sister, however, will soon leave the business of tormenting her family, to plague an husband; and I have the pleasure to inform you, that relenting fortune is preparing a blessing for Amanda, which will make her the happiest, as she is the best of women."

"I could now heave a sigh," said Don Cleofas,—“and a deep one too; for the history of these two sisters turns my memory to her who possessed the beauty of the one, and the virtues of the other.” “Such, I will acknowledge,” answered Asmodeus, “was your Seraphina;—but no more of that subject, I beseech you.” “You shall be obeyed,” replied the Count; “and we will,

will, if you please, direct our regards to a lady in the next house, who is reading a letter, and weeping at the contents of it."

"She shall not escape us," said the Demon; "but I must bespeak your more immediate attention to a little ceremonial, which it is impossible for me to pass by, and is taking place in a very handsome drawing-room, of which, by turning a little to the right, you will possess a very commanding view." "I perceive," replied Don Cleofas, "as it appears to me, a sober family party rising from a large card-table; and if there is any thing extraordinary in the business, your worship will be so kind as to explain it to me; for I must confess, that my sagacity is not equal to the discovery of it."

"That little assembly," said the Demon, "consists of a bishop and his family, with two visiting clergymen. The butler has just inter-

interrupted their evening amusement, by announcing the hour of evening prayer ; and his Lordship is now describing, with great precision, the present state of the game, that there may be no disputes, when they return from their pious devotions, to finish it.

“ I see,” continued Asmodeus, “ you are disposed to be witty on the occasion ; and I shall pass on, without hesitation, to the amiable woman, in whose sorrows your gallant humanity is so naturally interested. The letter she is reading was written by a very intimate friend of her own sex ; who having lost an husband whom she adored, retired immediately into the country, where she nourishes her affection for his memory with an enthusiasm that fills her friends with the most painful apprehensions that her reason is affected. She inhabits an elegant cottage, in a solitary valley, which had been the dwelling of her husband, before her marriage with him ;—she has surrounded

rounded it with weeping willows, and erected among them a sepulchral urn, inscribed with the name of him whose loss she so deeply laments. There she offers up her morning orisons, and solemnizes her evening vigils. She adorns it with garlands of the fairest flowers, decks her own hair with chaplets of cypress,—and calls herself *Myra of the Dale*.

“The lady whom you now contemplate, has been the friend of her life:—They were both of them born in the same year, and the friendship of their parents were communicated to them. It began in their earliest days;—‘it grew with their growth,—it strengthened with their strength;’ and has continued, without any interruption from folly or rivalry, to the present moment.—It was this friendship that dictated a letter to the widowed mourner in her solitude; which, with the most earnest remonstrances of reason, and in the warmest

language of affection, urged her to leave the unavailing retirement she had chosen, to check the romantic grief she encouraged, and to return to the world—to her friends—and to herself.

“The answer to this is very long, and very affecting ; but as it offers a very beautiful picture of a superior mind, whose reason is drowned in desponding sympathy,—whose happiness is sorrow,—and whose luxury is grief,—I will, in justice to the feelings of your excellent heart, repeat to you the concluding part of it.

‘ After eighteen months, my friend, of
‘ such perfect happiness as I have described
‘ to you,—the fatal hour which took my
‘ William from me, is never to be forgot-
‘ ten for a moment, and is never to be
‘ remembered but with anguish ; nor is the
‘ wound which his loss has made in my
‘ peace, to be healed.

‘ The

‘ The busy world is not an abode for
‘ me,—its pleasures disgust, and its oc-
‘ cupations distress me. In its gay and
‘ gilded scenes, I should not snatch a joy ;
‘ on its rosy couches I should find no rest ;
‘ and, in its most secret bowers, my spi-
‘ rit would search in vain for a tranquil
‘ moment.

‘ Friends were kind ;—you the most be-
‘ loved of them—the friend of all my
‘ days, took your share of my affliction :
‘ fortune smiled,—and flattery has assumed
‘ the most unsuspected form to woo me
‘ from my solitude.—Nay, love, insidious
‘ love, drew his bow, and aimed an arrow
‘ at me : but my poor heart is so consoli-
‘ dated into one affection, that the poison-
‘ ed barb rebounded from it. Yet it is
‘ love alone that animates my frame, and
‘ enlivens my soul ;—but it is not that ar-
‘ dent, warm, expanding passion, which
‘ lives only with the living, and glows in
‘ the communication with its object:—No,
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‘ it is love weeping beside a grave, with
‘ his bow unbent, and his arrows broken.
‘ Remembrance alone sustains it into life,
‘ and makes it struggle with existence.

‘ I turned my back on the busy world,
‘ which was become a desert to me, and
‘ retired to this social solitude. Here
‘ is William’s cottage,—here he dwelt in
‘ all the elegance of rural life, and gilded
‘ humble fortune with the charms of taste
‘ and science. Here he nursed a tender,
‘ a faithful, an unsuspected passion ; and
‘ his modest, unassuming nature would
‘ have made it the unknown companion
‘ of his life :—But I perceived his tran-
‘ scendant virtue, and forced the unwilling
‘ secret, that he loved me, from his bosom.
‘ I returned his love ; and scoffing at for-
‘ tune, elevated him to a station he was
‘ formed by nature to possess, and to which
‘ he gave a brilliant, but short-lived
‘ lustre,

‘ To

G 2

‘ vigils of morning light and evening
‘ shade; there I enjoy that luxury of grief,
‘ which is better—far better than the
‘ proudest joy.

‘ Know then, my friend, that even your
‘ anxious entreaties are vain. Never—
‘ never will I quit the sad, but dear abode.
‘ If I have, as you say, been the idol of
‘ the world,—I will be its idol no more.
‘ The period of my existence cannot come
‘ too soon,—but while I live, I will be
‘ *Myra of the Dale.*’

“ I would most willingly make a pilgrimage,” said Don Cleofas, “ to this amiable, but visionary mourner, surrounded with all this fanciful mechanism of sorrow. I should feel a melancholy pleasure in being the invisible companion of her walk; and when she adds her tears to the fountain, my heart would sympathize with her affliction.”

“ I, who

"I, who have conducted your Lordship hither from *Spain*," said Asmodeus, "with the rapidity of a whirlwind, most certainly possess the power of accomplishing your wish; nor would I hesitate to do it, if the journey would answer your expectations.—But be assured, my good friend, that these things are only pleasing in the description; and if I wished to cure you of your sympathetics, it would be by shewing you the reality.

"But to satisfy your longing for a whimsical woman, you have only to look into the adjoining house, and you will see a lady whose character will gratify your curiosity, without a single jar of your sensibility.

"She is, as you see, reclined on a sofa, and in such a delicate state of nerves, that she has not strength to raise herself up to return the salutations of her visitors. This lady, you must know, has two characters, one for the town, and the other for the

country.—In the former, she is all delicacy, softness and languid affectation; in the latter, she is an hoyden of the very first class. The elegant, refined woman of fashion in the winter, is, at another season of the year, transformed into the rustic Amazon and huntress of the woods. The nodding plumes and fluttering gauze are exchanged for the sportman's hat:—The hair, no longer tortured into curls, or frized into shape, hangs in unpowdered negligence. That form, to which the muslin and taffeta gave new grace, is enclosed in drab and drugget; while the well-turned ankle and pretty foot, yield all the elegance of silk, satin and spangles, to the rude covering of the boot and the glitter of the spur. Her face, which, during the spring, the zephyrs of Kensington-Gardens were thought to visit too roughly, encounters the cutting wind, and laughs at the insulting blast. Those spirits, which, in the winter, are agitated by the motion of a carriage, are now invigorated by rising boldly

boldly to the hill, and sinking rapidly to the plain;—and that voice, which, but a few months before, could hardly be persuaded, by the united efforts of flattery and fashion, to warble the softest melody of *Sacchini*, will strain itself in animating the hounds, and aiding the cry of the huntsman. Nor is this all:—The stomach that sickened so lately at the mention of porter, and could scarce support the strength of an Italian wine, partakes of the rural meal; with rustic appetite, feasts on toast and ale from a wooden bowl,—and finds it luxury.

“ Such a metamorphosis as takes place in this fair lady’s conduct, at different periods of the year, is to be accounted for by one simple and very common passion, and that is—an ardent love of admiration. To this point all her wishes and all her actions are directed, and in this object consists all the happiness she enjoys. This is the cause and origin of the rude life she leads

in the country, and the affected, lazy languor of her town residence.

“ In the remote part of the kingdom where her Lord’s estate is situated, she imagines that admiration is only to be obtained by the encouragement of rural sports, and the violence of rustic amusements; and in the pursuit of them she finds the applause of country squires and sporting neighbours. Hence it is that she, who the very evening before she left the country, took her coffee with pleasure in the stable, while the grooms were rubbing down the hunters, cannot now bear the noise of the knocker at her door, and turns with horror from a joint of meat, lest the smell of should throw her into hysterics.

“ The life of this lady, alas! is rendered, by her own folly, a state of delusion, which time is hastening to destroy. She is, as you must perceive, extremely handsome; and the admiration which is offered to her
beauty,

you, she is conducted hither by no less a person than her own husband. But this is not all:—for it is agreed between them, that he shall prosecute the unsuspicious lover for the illicit conversation which this very visit produces; and no inconsiderable pecuniary advantage might be the result of such a measure—but an hair-dresser, whom they employ to assist them in their honourable arrangement, will be dishonourable enough to betray them; so that this worthy Benedict, as he well deserves, will lose his cause,—” “And his character, I should imagine, into the bargain,” said the Count.” “As for that little family moveable,” answered the Demon, “he has contrived to get rid of it long ago.

“I shall present but one object more,” continued Asmodeus, “to your notice, in this quarter; and when you have taken a peep at him, we will immediately change our situation. You will, therefore, be so good

good as to direct your attention to what is going forward in the lower story of the corner-house to the left of us. You must there perceive a little old man, in a red night-cap, with two persons of the same age with himself, who are examining through their spectacles, with all the eagerness of anxious curiosity, the contents of a large phial. They are three of those professed antiquarians, who, regardless of beauty, taste, or useful contrivance, concentrate all their ideas of excellence in mere antiquity. An old manuscript, whose characters are not legible, or if legible, does not contain a sentence worth the reading, will be preferred by them to the most superb edition of a modern author, though the work were written with the eloquence of *Cicero*, and dictated by the wisdom of *Solomon*: And any miserable bit of copper, with a half-defaced figure or superscription on it, which has been found by a workman in digging a well, or pulling down a wall, would be considered

by these curious people, of far greater value than the largest piece of current gold coin in this or any other kingdom.

“ Their present meeting is occasioned by a very singular circumstance, the secret of which is only known to these three scientific characters.—For an explanation of the business, I must inform you, that the Antiquarian Society of London obtained permission, within these few days, to examine a tomb in Westminster Abbey, which was supposed to contain the remains of one of the most antient kings of this country. The ceremony of opening this royal sepulchre was accordingly attended by a deputation of the Society; and the body of the Sovereign was found, after a sepulture of many hundred years, to possess the appearance of having been but lately buried. This was a most interesting object for the profound lovers of antiquity: but as the exposure of the corpse to the air,—an entire exclusion from which occa-

sioned its extraordinary preservation,—began to produce a very visible change in its appearance, the Dean of the church, who was present, commanded the violated rights of burial to be immediately restored. In the interim, however, the little old man in the red night-cap, who was one of the antiquarian deputation, had contrived, without being observed, to twist off the fore-finger from the right-hand of his Majesty; and it is that fore-finger, secured in a phial of spirits, which he is now discovering, with no common exultation, to two of his most particular friends; who are such determined antiquarians, that they would willingly take upon them the sin of his sacrilege, to possess such an invaluable treasure.

“It is rather cruel,” said the Demon, “not to allow you time to enjoy a little mirth on the occasion; but you must excuse me, if I desire you to prepare for an instant removal.” This request was no sooner

sooner made, than they cleft the air, and, in a few moments, were seated on the roof of an house in the neighbourhood of Soho.

“ I shall not detain your Lordship long in this situation,” said Asmodeus, “ as I have a very particular spectacle in view for your further amusement, in another part of the town; but as the preparations are not quite completed, we will, in the meantime, just take a view of what is going forward in the district immediately around us.”

“ My curiosity,” answered the Count, “ is already directed to the garret opposite to us, where I perceive several young women, who are exchanging the rags of poverty for all the elegant decorations of fashionable life. I should suppose that they must be actresses, who are preparing themselves to appear in some public exhibition.” “ They are actresses, indeed,” replied the Demon, “ who perform their parts

parts in a tragic drama, which is equally calculated to produce the emotions of horror and pity in the breast of every humane spectator.

“ The house which they inhabit is a notorious brothel ; and these poor creatures are now decorating themselves to receive the evening visitors who frequent it. After passing the day in the filth and stench of a kitchen, they are driven up to the garret, where you now see them, to be dressed out as victims for the nocturnal sacrifice of prostitution. The woman who receives all the gains of their abandoned life, is enjoying herself, in the parlour, over a bowl of punch, with a notorious gambler, whom she supports to be her bully ; or, in her own more decent expression, to preserve the character of her house.”

“ This, I presume,” said Don Cleofas, “ is the hour of sacrifice ; for I see, in the court to the left of us, another victim, as
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fantastically adorned with ribbons and flowers, as if she were destined to an altar of pagan idolatry." "Her sacrifice is already past," answered the Demon; "the poor girl's honour has been offered up at the shrine of brutal lust, and her understanding could not survive the loss: She is no longer in her right mind, and is confined in the house where you now see her."

"Her fine form and melancholy aspect, interest me deeply," replied the Count; "and, if her history contains any circumstances particularly affecting, I shall request the communication of it." "The story is not to the honour of your sex," replied the Demon; "nor will it serve as a moral lesson to you, who are superior to the cruel artifice which it displays; but as it offers an example of the human passions which has not yet occurred to us, I shall, without hesitation, comply with your desire."

"Susan:

"*Susan* is the daughter of a worthy man, who was steward to a Mr. B——, a gentleman of considerable fortune in the west of England. She was adorned with some share of beauty, and possessed a most amiable disposition, which, from the accidental circumstances of her situation, were improved into elegance and accomplishment. Mr. B—— had an only daughter; and as *Susan* was of her age, she was her constant play-fellow and companion.— Mr. B—— being also of opinion, that a spirit of emulation might incite his daughter to a more rapid improvement in the different branches of her education, ordered the masters who attended Miss B——, to give their attentions also to *Susan*; so that she became, in a great degree, as accomplished as her friend, for whose sake she was instructed.

"Several years had now passed on, and *Susan* was the favourite of all who knew her, but of none more than the amiable young

young lady, whose inseparable companion she was. The time, however, drew nigh when they were destined to part. A gentleman of large fortune, whose name was *Freeman*, made proposals of marriage to Miss B——, which were immediately accepted; and she soon after quitted her father's house for that of an husband.

“ Susan grieved in sincerity and in silence, at this separation from her kind patroness; who, soon after her marriage, set out with her family to make the tour of Europe. She remained abroad three years, and though Susan loved her father, and lived in the continual exercise of duty and affection to him, the letters she received from Mrs. Freeman were very principal sources of happiness to her, during all that time.

“ At length, however, her friend returned to England, and Susan received an invitation to pass the following winter with her

her in London. It was not long, therefore, before she enjoyed a situation, which, for some time, she thought the happiest upon earth. But Susan, as I have already observed, was handsome, and her personal charms were accompanied with that softness of manners and sensibility of character, which tend to awaken an interest in the breast of all who are within their influence.

“ Thus endowed, Susan was so unfortunate as to attract the libertine attentions of Mr. Freeman himself. Though he had every reason to be attached to his wife, he had not been the constant husband she merited to possess ; and he was now engaged in the project of making another and a very cruel offering at the shrine of infidelity. His assiduities, however, did not appear to the innocent, unsuspecting Susan, but as the warm attentions of a friend ;—and he was obliged to speak very plain indeed, before she could be persuaded to credit

credit the reality and extent of his designs. But when, at length, the veil was drawn aside, and she could no longer disbelieve the sincerity of Mr. Freeman's abandoned proposals, her situation became truly deplorable. To inform her best friend of all this cruel business, would be to plant a dagger in her bosom; and to remain in her present alarming situation, without taking some effectual method to guard against the dangers of it, would be to risk all that was most dear to herself. She, therefore, wrote a precise state of the unhappy circumstances with which she was surrounded, to her father, and implored his immediate presence to snatch her from them.

“ In the interval, however, Mr. Freeman, who had been baffled in his more open advances, laid a secret plan, in which he cruelly succeeded:—for when a man is so lost to principle, and so profligate in the indulgence of his passion, as to employ an opiate, that he may take the brutal advantage

tage of insensibility,—where is the innocence that can withstand him?—Poor Susan awakened from her delirium, and found herself in a strange apartment, and in her violator's arms. She became instantly outrageous, and on hearing her situation explained, her frenzy augmented. A fever immediately ensued, and her senses became violently disordered; nor have they ever recovered themselves, but for very short and dubious intervals.

“Susan's father no sooner received her letter, than he set off with his son for London. When they arrived at Mr. Freeman's house, the servants informed them that Susan was gone away with some one whom they did not know, and that no tidings whatever had since been received concerning her. The poor man now began to fear the worst; and it was after several days employed in a distracting search, and from the interference of an active magistrate, that he, at length, obtained a sight
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of his child, in a situation beyond his relief. Finding, however, that nothing effectual could be done to punish the seducer, without bringing down tenfold misery on Mrs. Freeman, the daughter of his friend and master; and that the gratification of his vengeance would not alleviate the afflictions, or restore the honour of his child,—he thought it most prudent to receive the miserable satisfaction of an annuity of three hundred pounds, during her life, which has enabled him to place her under the best care, and to provide every comfort which her lamentable situation is capable of receiving.

“ Poor Susan is now a wretched maniac, and will remain so to the end of her days. In her more tranquil intervals, she knows her friends, is sensible of her situation, and calls herself *mad Susan*. She loves to dress her hair with flowers, as you now behold her, and amuses her shattered imagination with singing melancholy ditties. Her infamous

famous seducer is at this moment the subject of her sad soliloquy. "Alas!" she says, "he may roll along in plenty—but not in peace: mad Susan haunts him while he is at the jovial banquet: if he joins the midnight revel, mad Susan meets him there. Go tell him," continues she, "go tell all his sex, that when, to gratify a moment's burning passion, they give disgrace and despair to the whole life of a wretched female, they are like those infernal fiends who are permitted by Heaven to make poor Susan mad, — and keep her so."

"As for Mrs. Freeman," continued Asmodeus, "she was so sensibly affected with the iniquity of her husband's conduct, that she insisted on an immediate separation, and is retired to live with her father in the country; where an increasing nervous disorder serves to heighten her affliction, and will shortly put an end to it."

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"I not only expected," said Don Cleofas, "but sincerely hoped that your story would not have finished here. I long to hear that the author of all this misery, though he may have eluded the vengeance of the law, has found an ignominious and mortifying punishment in the avowed contempt and abhorrence of all mankind."—

"Alas! my good friend," replied the Demon, "you are most woefully mistaken, if you imagine, that a man with an estate of seven thousand pounds a-year, who lives in splendour and hospitality, and acts, in the language of the world, like a gentleman, will lose his character or his friends among people of fashion,—because he has broken the heart of an amiable wife, or, in any way, violated the honour of a country steward's daughter.

"But we will now, if you please, turn away from such an unpleasant object; and to relieve your attention from the horrors of human depravity, I shall transfer it to
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a very uncommon example of human industry; I therefore recommend that busy person, in the lower room of a large house a little to the right of us, to your very particular notice. The table at which he is writing, is covered with books and papers, and the room is surrounded with piles of printed works in sheets." "He is then, I presume," said Don Cleofas, "an author of great reputation." "I cannot absolutely allow that, answered the Demon; "but if you will prepare a tolerable stock of patience and recollection, I will give you a *catalogue* of what he is.

"He is—*A Printer,*
A Publisher,
A Bookseller,
An Author,
A Compiler,
A Translator,
An Editor,
An Orator,
An Almanack-Maker,
 And—*A Parson.*

“ His wife also, for he suffers no one that belongs to him to rest in peace, without attempting to turn the penny, is ready to teach persons of her own sex, vocal and instrumental music.

“ To give you an adequate idea of the various publications which have proceeded from the versatile labours of this indefatigable man, I shall astonish you with an account of the general subjects of them.—

“ They are,—*Chronology,*

History,

Law,

Geography,

Biography,

Travels,

Manners,

Morals,

Novels,

Æconomy,

Farming,

Gardening,

Horse-Dealing,

And—*Divinity.*

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“But his most celebrated publication, and that which possesses the greatest share of originality, is a work invented to save his brother parsons the trouble of making their own sermons, without being suspected of preaching those of others,

“For this purpose, he has invented, or somebody for him, a species of printing types, imitating that kind of crabbed characters which may be supposed to flow from the pen of an orthodox divine. With this curious letter he has printed, at various times, a great number of sermons, selected and compiled from the works of celebrated preachers, which, at a very small distance, possess the appearance of a manuscript. So that an idle parson may place one of these discourses on the cushion of his pulpit, with full confidence, that any part of his congregation who may be so situated as to overlook him, will give him all the credit he can desire, for a sermon of his own composition, and written with his own

pen; and as every emphatic word is carefully marked in these discourses, the clergy are equally indebted to him for his instructions in reading, as well as his assistance in preaching.

“But this is not all:—The reverend gentleman is too zealous in any of his improvements or productions, not to extend them to every degree of utility to which they can possibly be adapted. He has, therefore, composed a certain quantity of beginnings and endings, which being tacked on, under his written directions, to any of these sermons, will render them suitable to all times, seasons or occasions, to which a sermon can be applied.

“For instance,—a discourse for Christmas-day, by a proper introduction of beginnings and endings, will serve equally well for Good-Friday or Easter-Sunday, or the Ascension, &c.: so that the same sermon, by an appropriate change of these
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occasional and convenient additions, may be preached, with equal propriety, before the King, or the Lord-Mayor; the Judges of Assize, or the Apothecaries Company; the Sons of the Clergy, or the Convicts in Newgate.—By the same transformation of scenery, it will suit a feast, or a fast;—an inauguration, or a fifth of November;—a music-meeting, or a funeral;—the Constitutional Society, or King Charles's Martyrdom.

“ This industrious divine, of various callings, is, without doubt, a most useful character, by diffusing so much important knowledge in the world, and adding, in so great a degree, to the ease and convenience of life. Nevertheless, envious witticism has been known to indulge itself on his subject; and while some have described him as an ass laden with books, others have represented him as an harlequin, arrayed in a party-coloured garment, every patch

of which is covered with a title-page of one or other of his publications.

“But from the slavery of learning,” continued the Demon, “permit me to introduce you to the dignity of it. For this purpose, you must look across the street to a drawing-room, elegantly illuminated, and observe a company of gentlemen seated round a table, who are examining, with microscopes, an object that seems to excite their utmost curiosity, and to occupy all their attention.

The house where this party is assembled, belongs to the president of a very learned society; and the gentleman who sits with his back towards the chimney-piece, has the honour of possessing that character. The subject of their accurate investigation and laborious discussion, is a very curious butterfly; in whose organs of generation a defect has been discovered, which renders the sex of the insect very doubt-

doubtful. The important question, therefore, that has arisen, is, whether this defect is accidental or specific. But the opinions of these scientific men are so opposite, and maintained with such obstinacy, that natural history will not, at present, be enriched with a decided opinion on this very interesting subject."

"But who is that grave-looking person," said the Count, "whom I see sitting in an unnoticed state of tranquillity, at the other end of the room; and is, to all appearance, excluded from any share in the solemn discussion?"

"He has been waiting there these two hours," answered Asmodeus, "for an audience of the president; and, in one more, he may be able to obtain it. Some foolish people might be disposed to think that he did not merit such neglectful treatment; and he himself, perhaps, may be weak enough to be of the same opinion;

but his mind has long been habituated to the practice of patience,—for he is one of the first mathematicians of this age or country.”

“ In the very next house,” said Don Cleofas, “ I perceive an elderly gentleman, and who, from the employment that now engages him, I may presume, adds another literary character to our evening observations. Permit me to enquire, my good friend, into the subject of that manuscript which now occupies his studious labours.”

“ It is,” answered the Demon, “ a certain treatise on mortality, called a last will and testament. He is a fanciful old bachelor, of considerable property, who, for some years past, has never failed to alter his will, and change his heir, at least every three months; but finding that, the moment he has made any one the inheritor of his fortune, he conceives so violent an aversion to him, as to be very uneasy in
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his company ; he is determined, at last, to leave the whole of his estate to a man whom he has never seen, or is likely to see ; and the business of this evening, in which you see him so anxiously employed, is to make a testamentary arrangement for that curious purpose."

" But my attention is already transferred," said Don Cleofas, " to a jovial little company, in a tavern to the right of us ; and who do not seem to be employing their thoughts on any thing like mortality. On the contrary, they appear to be enjoying their bottle with so much satisfaction, that the very sight of them makes me thirsty."

" That party," answered the Demon, " consists of two naval and two military officers, all of whom enjoy very lucrative employments or profitable rank. You may, perhaps, on that account, be disposed to consider them with an eye of pleasure,

as men who possess great professional merit, and have deserved highly of their country : But be that as it may,—they owe their present situation to other and more fortunate circumstances.—The first sings an excellent song,—the second has been useful to a great man's pleasure,—the third has a very handsome wife,—and the fourth a very beautiful sister. I perceive," continued Asmodeus, "a very lively expression of astonishment arising in your Lordship's countenance ;—but such, my dear friend, is the way of this wicked world in which you live ;—and such are the very common means of advancement in it.—Nor will it lessen your surprise, when I bring to your recollection, that, this very evening, we have seen a naval officer, of great merit, who keeps a lodging-house for his support. But this is not all :—for were I to take you to some of the remote parts of the kingdom, you would there behold many a brave man, who has lost half his limbs in the defence of his country,

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just able to sustain the remainder on the miserable pittance which the gratitude of that country allows him.

“ But before we take our flight from this quarter, I will indulge you with a more satisfactory spectacle.

“ For this purpose,” continued the Demon, “ I must solicit your attention to the lady who, in an upper story before us, is looking with an affectionate attention on two children, who are asleep in the bed, the curtains of which she has just opened.”

“ The watchful spirit of maternal tenderness has, I presume,” said the Count, “ conducted her to this amiable office.”

“ It is even so,” answered Asmodeus; “ though she is not their mother by nature—but by adoption; and as it is my design to unfold to you the operations of the mind, in all their various influences, I

I shall make no apology for introducing you to the history of the person who is the object of your immediate attention.—It is as follows :

“ *Meretilla* was originally a maid-servant to a gentleman of family and fortune. He had lost a wife whom he loved, was left without children, and from certain circumstances, which it would interrupt my present subject to explain, he was rather disgusted with the world. He lived much at home, and generally passed the greatest part of every day in the occupations of his library. He was, however, still of an age to be sensible to the charms of beauty, and to feel the superior pleasure of female society;—and having determined never to marry again, the design of forming a connexion of a different and less obligatory nature, had often occurred to him : such however, was the turn of his disposition and the retirement of his life, that the difficulty of arranging a business of this kind,

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to his satisfaction, was almost insuperable. At length, he cast his eyes on Meretilla: She was rather handsome, possessed a very pleasing manner of behaviour, for one in her station, and was remarkable for an uncommon sweetness of voice, which discovered itself even in the most ordinary occasions of speech. Her master, therefore, made proposals to her of a very liberal nature, and she did not long hesitate in accepting them.

“ With this gentleman she lived during the few years he lived himself; and had so won his regard by her amiable and pleasing demeanour, that, at his death, he left her a very comfortable provision.— However, such had been her conduct, and so much was she improved, by the instructions of her late friend, that it was not long before she was solicited, with offers of great advantage, to receive a successor to him.

“ Meretilla

“ Meretilla possessed a very good understanding; and she could not but know, that the way of life in which she had been lately engaged, was considered with contempt by the greater part of mankind, and with a distant pity by the rest; she determined, therefore, to make some amends for this disadvantage, by paying a very principal attention to her own interest; and as she was in a situation to despair almost of becoming respectable, she was resolved to employ every prudent means of encreasing her independence. She accordingly, in direct opposition to the conduct of the greater part of her unfortunate class, took care to avoid all extravagance of fashion and pleasure, and to practise the saving art of a judicious economy; so that she was never quitted, from the caprice or lassitude of any of her protectors, without having made a considerable addition to her fortune. When her last friend died, who left her five thousand pounds, she found herself not only in the possession of an ample

ple independence, but in a comparative state of affluence.

“ Thus situated, she made the prudent, and which, surely may be called, the virtuous resolution, of bidding adieu to her former mode of life. With this view, she took the house she now inhabits, which is in a part of the town very distant from that where she had hitherto lived; and as she had been accustomed to appear very little in public, she now flattered herself with the hope of passing the rest of her days unsuspected and unknown.

“ It so happened, that her landlord, who is a man of some property, is a very zealous methodist; and as she had formed an intimacy with his family, it may be natural to suppose that she could not escape without being, in some degree, infected by the enthusiasm of the tabernacle. This was really the case; and, under such an influence, she soon began to look on her past life

life as stained with a crime, that could only be done away by the propitiations of that which remained. To obtain this important and consolatory end, she determined to employ the gains of prostitution in works of charity; and her methodistical friends did not fail to furnish her with continual opportunities of fulfilling her pious resolutions. Such is her present situation; and the particular example of her benevolence, which has quickened your attention to her, will conclude my story.

“ A confidential clerk to an eminent banker, having entered into engagements for a false friend, which he could not fulfil, was compelled to change the comforts of a very comfortable home, for the miseries of a prison. As the maintenance of himself and his family entirely depended on that personal attendance which was now impracticable, distress soon began to press hard upon them. He grew despondent, and his children cried for bread; but his wife

wife was handsome ; and, on applying to one of her female friends, whom she thought the best woman in the world, she was kindly advised to prostitute her charms, in order to relieve her distress ; and the means of doing it with secrecy and advantage, were readily suggested. The poor woman trembled at the unexpected proposal ;—but her babes would soon want food, and their unhappy mother must have shortly sacrificed herself for their sakes.—With the last trifle, however, that she could raise, she made her deplorable case known to the public ; and the advertisement which related the story of her distresses, happily met the eyes, and awakened the compassionate attention of Meretilla ; who immediately sent for the unfortunate woman, to give a particular account of her sorrows. They were no sooner explained than they were relieved. Her husband was restored to his former situation, and the family reinstated in its former comfort. Meretilla has since taken the children to her own house,

house, to superintend their education; and, when she dies, will leave her fortune between them. Thus, by saving an amiable woman from prostitution, Meretilla trusts, and surely without being guilty of presumption, that she has made some atonement for her own.

“And now,” added the Demon, “we will proceed on the progress of the evening.”

“But before we depart,” said the Count, “be so kind as to satisfy my curiosity relative to a small groupe of gentlemen in the parlour of that large house, at the corner of the street, who seem to be debating some important subject; and are so eager in the business, that they are all speaking at one and the same moment.”

“They are three physicians of eminence,” answered Asmodeus, “who have been employed

employed in a consultation on the disorder of a sick man of fashion, who is dying in the room over them." "Then, I suppose," said Don Cleofas, "that these learned sons of *Galen* do not agree as to the nature of the remedies to be prescribed for the patient." "You never were more mistaken in your life," said the Demon; "their professional business was dispatched in a very few minutes, and they are now engaged in a violent dispute on politics:—but to complete the scene—their political altercation will be interrupted and cut short, by the information that their patient has breathed his last. Thus it is that medical men habitually trifle with death, till he knocks at their own doors."

The Démon now seized Don Cleofas by the arm, and, in a few moments, they were seated on the top of St. Giles's Church; from whence they possessed a very commanding view of the various scenes and

engagements which are appropriate to that accomplished part of the town.

“ This quarter,” said the Demon, “ is notorious for being the resort and habitation of the inferior class of rogues and vagabonds, who infest this city ; and in presenting them to your attention, I infringe upon the province of a Spirit who is appointed to preside over them ; of course, I run some risque of being called to an account by my superiors, for the intrusion ; more especially as he and I are the least connected of any of our confraternity. Love is the passion assigned to my direction ; and poverty and roguery are, in general, its most inveterate enemies. We must, therefore, dispatch our business here with all possible expedition.”

“ Do then be so kind,” said Don Cleofas, “ as to begin with communicating to me the meaning of a figure which I see in the garret opposite to us. It is dressed in
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the common habit of a man, and is suspended by wires from the ceiling: if I mistake not, there are a great number of small bells slenderly hung on every part of it."

"You now look," answered the Demon, "on an academy for teaching the sublime art of picking pockets, with a motley groupe of ragged pupils, who are taking their lessons in it; and when any of those boys have attained the dexterity of purloining an article from the different pockets of the figure, without producing a sound from any of the bells,—they are considered as being sufficient adepts in their trade, and are dispatched to exercise it in the streets and public places of this metropolis. But I must entreat you to observe, that while the master of the school is busied in giving his instructions, one of his pupils affords a very sufficient proof of the advantage he has received from them, by conveying

veying a tobacco-box from his pocket, without his being sensible of the theft.

“ In the floor beneath, there are three well-looking, stout young men, who are feasting luxuriously on a fine piece of roast-beef, and washing it down with plenty of good-liquor. As soon as they have finished their banquet, each of them will get into a good bed, and sleep in comfort till the morning; when, after having taken a plentiful breakfast, they will sally forth in the character of maimed and wounded sailors, to solicit the charity of the public, with scarce a sound limb among them.”

“ In the very next house, however,” said Don Cleofas, “ I perceive two women, whose limbs appear to possess all the strength and activity necessary to tear each other to pieces. They are fighting with such a degree of savage fury, that if some of their neighbours do not interfere, it will surely end in the death of one or other of
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the combatants. What, in the name of wonder, can be the object of such an inveterate contest?"

"A very innocent one," answered Afmodeus; "for it is a poor little babe, who is now sleeping in a cradle, which you may see in a corner of the room, and happily insensible to all the discord it occasions. One of these women is the mother of the infant, and the other is a beggar, who hired it, at a stipulated price, for the day, as an additional incitement to the charity of the charitable.

"The parent, however, having observed some marks upon its neck, which the other acknowledged to have produced by pinching it, in order to call forth those cries which might compel, as it were, the compassionate relief of the passenger;—the former made an immediate demand of an extraordinary gratuity for such an use of the child, for which the latter had not

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bargained; and the absolute refusal to comply with such a reasonable demand, has occasioned this furious combat; which will not cease, till the enraged parties are no longer able to continue it.

“And now, by one hasty step,” continued the Demon, “I must descend with you to the cellar of the same mansion, and shall beg the favour of your Lordship to inform me, whether you see any thing that merits your particular attention in that agreeable cavern?”

“Besides certain preparations for eating and drinking,” answered the Count, “I perceive a long table, without any cloth or covering whatever, with a number of wooden trenchers, placed in as regular order as if they were nailed upon it, and a proportionate quantity of knives and forks, fastened by small iron chains to the spot.” “All this various arrangement,” said the Demon, “proceeds from the very necessary circum-

cumspection of the honest landlord of this subterranean banquetting-room. For such is the well-known disposition of his guests, that if he does not take care to be paid before-hand, he will never be paid at all; and if he did not employ the precaution of securing his implements of eating, as you see them, he might look in vain, at the close of the evening, for a single knife or fork, or one solitary trencher, to employ in the service of his own supper.

“ I must now desire you to let your eye run a little down the alley immediately opposite to us, and you cannot avoid seeing a company of very ill-looking men, who are at this moment debating a matter of some importance, with a smart young fellow, in a blue great-coat and a silver-laced hat, with a cockade in it. They are a gang of house-breakers, who are settling a plan to enter the hotel of a nobleman who is known to possess a very superb service of plate; and the young man, who is one of

his Lordship's faithful servants, has agreed, upon certain terms, to leave a lower window of the house in such a defenceless state, as to afford them a very easy entrance.—He, however, insists upon being paid in advance; and they refuse to reward him for his iniquity, till his fidelity to them is proved by the success of their operations; so that the natural suspicion, which these villains entertain of each other, will preserve the noble Lord's plate on his side-board,—at least, for the present."

"There is, however, in the cellar of the adjoining house," said Don Cleofas, "a poor laborious man, who appears to have other views of obtaining the precious metals: for, from his actual occupation, I should suppose him to be one of those miserable philosophers, who console themselves in present poverty, with the fanciful expectations of fallacious alchemy."

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“Be that as it may,” answered the Demon, “this evening, at least, will not gratify his hopes; for the furnace which he is now preparing, is intended to melt down the beautiful and laboured forms of that massive booty with which his honest neighbours had fully expected to supply him.

“On the opposite side of the alley, you may see a man, and a very sturdy fellow too, who is threatening to chastise a poor, submissive, trembling woman, with a very unmerciful beating. He is a beggar by profession; and, after a very successful day, —for a gentleman, from the warm inattention of charity, gave him a guinea instead of an halfpenny,—ordered a repast of the best tea, with double refined sugar; and is now menacing his wife with a severe bastinado, for having buttered his toast only on one side.”

“While you were speaking,” said the Count, “my attention has been engaged

by two very old men, in shabby apparel, who were conversing, with great gravity, by the light of a very dim taper, stuck in a piece of clay, in the lower room of the house at the very extremity of the place; and before I could well observe what they were about, one of them put out the light, and I can see them no more."

"They are two very wealthy misers," answered the Demon, "who are conversing together upon a little plan of usury; and, as the business requires the exertion of no sense but that of hearing, they conceive it to be an unpardonable extravagance to waste an inch of a farthing candle, when their business with each other can be as well transacted in the dark.

"But I must now entreat your Lordship to ascend two pair of stairs, that I may have the honour of introducing you to a person of some rank, and no little importance in this metropolis. You will there

see two men very busily employed in examining a quantity of wearing apparel.—The elder of the two is a reputable dealer in old cloaths, and the other is a very honourable gentleman, pretty generally known, in this country, under the title of *Jack Ketch*. He is the public executioner of this city; and, having hanged half a dozen convicts this morning, is now come to dispose of their cloaths, which are a part of the fees belonging to his respectable office.”

“What a wonderful encouragement,” exclaimed Don Cleofas, “do the wants and vices of this town afford for industry and ingenuity!” “It is very true,” said the Demon; “and in the first-floor of that very house, there is another curious example of it. You must there see a woman surrounded with as many baskets of linen, of various kinds, as would be sufficient to stock a considerable warehouse, all of which are stolen goods; and her ad-

mirable occupation consists in unravelling the marks with which their former owners had distinguished them ; in order that they may hereafter be offered to sale, without risking a discovery of the honest people who stole them.

“ I shall propose another character to your attention,” continued Asmodeus, “ and we will then quit a district of which you have, probably, seen enough to satisfy your curiosity ; and where, to tell you the truth, for reasons already explained, I am not quite at my ease.

“ Cast your eyes, therefore, on a small chamber, in the adjoining house, where you will see a very old man blowing a fire, with an earthen pipkin upon it, in which he is preparing a little broth for his supper. As you must perceive that his little apartment is furnished in a very neat, though humble manner, it will call forth your surprise, perhaps, when I tell you, that

that his daily business is that of soliciting alms in the streets. He has actually followed the trade of a beggar near forty years; and it will add to your astonishment, when I tell you, that the business has answered so well, as to enable him, if he thought proper, instead of receiving charity on foot, to distribute it himself from a coach.

“ An humble demeanour, cleanly rags, an occasional cough, an infirm gait, a trembling hand, and an affecting modesty of solicitation, with a ready story, full of uncommon misfortunes, have combined to the acquisition of greater gain, than many a man finds from the employment of active diligence, and the exertion of superior talents.

“ He has a wife of his own age, and a daughter who has not yet reached her twentieth year, both of whom are supported by him in all the decent comforts of life. His

wife had formerly followed the occupation of her husband; and, at the time when a daughter was added to them, they had contrived, by their industry and oeconomy, to amass a very considerable sum of money. The good man, therefore, determined, tho' he was a beggar, and had formed the resolution to continue his trade as long as he was able, to bring up his child as a gentlewoman. His wife, therefore, in a short time, assumed the character of a widow; a convenient house was taken by her in a retired part of the town, where she has resided ever since, and the daughter has received an education becoming the fortune she is destined to possess. As they conduct themselves with great propriety, they are considered with much respect by the small circle of their acquaintance; and the father visits them, at stated periods, as a poor old man, who is, in a great measure, indebted for his support to their benevolence. Nay, so perfectly does he understand his character, that he receives very
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frequent donations from the visitors of his wife and daughter; and it was but the other day, that he accepted, with humble gratitude, an eleemosynary half-crown from a benevolent man, who is the music-master of the latter.

“Thus he pursues his successful vocation; and, as opportunity serves, conveys the fruits of his perseverance to his wife, who acts the part of a faithful steward; and in whose name a sum of no small account is invested in the public funds.”

“This is one of the most extraordinary histories,” said Don Cleofas — — “Do not interrupt me, if you please,” replied Asmodeus; “for the most interesting part of the business is yet to be related.

“The gains of the day, for some time past, have not been the only objects of this old man’s consideration. His child is of an age to be settled in the world,

and the father is in a condition to command, as far as money will do it, a very comfortable situation for her. But how to arrange such an important purpose, so as to prevent his being deceived on the one hand, and to preserve his daughter from being disgraced on the other, has been of late so continually in his thoughts, that he has frequently suffered the passengers in the streets to escape his habitual sollicitation. At length, however, an idea occurred to him, which, after some reflection, grew into a project that he determined to put in immediate execution,—and he has this day fulfilled his design.

“It has, for many years, been his ordinary practice to attend, on Sundays, at the door of some or other of the numerous places of public worship in this metropolis, to solicit the charity of their respective congregations. Among others, he has frequently attended a chapel, at the west-end of the town; and, for some time past, however

however casual the contributions might be of the people who frequented it, he never failed to receive a small piece of silver, accompanied with kind expressions of consolation, from a young clergyman, who officiates as the preacher of it.

“ No longer ago than Sunday last, he attended there on his accustomed business; and it being a very rainy day, the clergyman doubled his usual benevolence,—asked him several questions concerning his age and his distresses, and desired the mendicant to call upon him as this morning, to receive further relief; as he had a sum of money entrusted to his discretion, by a charitable lady, that it might be distributed among such objects as appeared to him deserving of it.

“ The old beggar, who had every reason to bless the benevolent spirit of this amiable clergyman, conceived a desire to know something more concerning him;

and taking an opportunity to make his enquiries in the neighbourhood, he was informed that his benefactor was a person of most exemplary character, and that his preferment in the church was very inadequate to his superior merits. On receiving this information, the old man determined to avail himself of the opportunity he should shortly possess, of unfolding the whole history of his life to the young divine; and, at the same time, to make him an offer of all he possessed, if he would consent to receive it as the marriage-portion of his daughter.

“On this morning the worthy clergyman was astonished with the premeditated proposal. He, at first, conceived that the poor aged mendicant was, in addition to his other afflictions, deprived of his right understanding, and he could not help discovering somewhat of his very natural suspicions on the occasion. He was, however, after some further conversation, fully con-

convinced that this extraordinary beggar was sufficiently wealthy to realize his proposals; which were no less than to give him eight thousand pounds, as the marriage-portion of his daughter; and to secure him, at least, four more, on the death of her mother,

“ This was an offer which the young divine could not, with any degree of prudence, either hastily accept, or peremptorily refuse. He promised, however, to pay a visit that very afternoon, to the female part of the family; and the old man, having given him a written introduction for that purpose, took his leave, to pursue the usual occupation of the day.

“ I shall not enter into a detail of the various operations of this strange event upon the reverend gentleman's mind; nor shall I undertake to determine, whether curiosity or interest, or what other motive preponderated, to induce him to pay the
pro-

promised visit. It will be sufficient for me to inform you, that he fulfilled the promise he had made,—that he found all the old man's representations to him fully confirmed, and that the daughter was a woman of such a pleasant appearance and amiable manners, that he would not have hesitated a moment to have led her to the altar,—if she had not been the offspring of a beggar.

“ While this idea was working in his mind, a very gentle stroke of the knocker announced the arrival of the father. The maid-servant was immediately dispatched on some premeditated errand, and the subject of the morning was renewed and enforced :—’Till, at length, the pecuniary advantages which were offered, the charms of the young woman, and the hard-wrung promise of the old man, that he would immediately quit his trade, assume a becoming appearance, and retire to live in the country,

country,—determined the clergyman to marry the beggar's daughter.

“ In a very short time the nuptials will be solemnized, and the newspapers will announce, in due form, the marriage of the Rev. Mr. ———, morning preacher of ——— Chapel, to Miss ———, daughter of Mrs. ———, of ——— street, Marybone: and I do not know of a matrimonial engagement that promises more solid happiness.

“ The old man is now taking his last supper in a chamber, which he has inhabited so many years, and will leave with some regret, to pass, what he considers, an idle and unprofitable life, in a village at a small distance from town; from whence, however, he will occasionally steal, to pay a short visit to his daughter.

“ His son-in-law will never fail to treat him with all becoming regard; but,
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at the same time, according to the principles of that religion whose doctrines it is his profession to teach, he will be most piously rejoiced when the old man has exchanged this world for a better."

"My astonishment," said Don Cleofas, "at this history, which I have heard from you, is equal, I believe, to that of the parson, when he heard it from the beggar himself." "That is very possible," replied Asmodeus; "but I must be so unpolite as to acquaint you that there is no time, at present, for your observations."

"If that is the case," answered the Count, "be so good as to silence them, by informing me concerning that jovial feast which I see in the public-house to the left of us. There are no beggars, I believe, in that company; for the table seems almost ready to sink beneath the abundance of good things which are placed upon it." "Your conjecture is right," said the Demon; "the
guests

guests are all prosperous people; nevertheless, it is the beggars who furnish this entertainment, while they themselves are starving.

“You must know then, that it is a meeting of the parish officers, to settle the accounts of the parochial poor; a duty which cannot be fulfilled, with propriety, without a pretty deal of good eating and drinking, and for which the poor’s-box finds the supplies. This evening, supper was ready before the business was completed; so that, to the great joy of the party, another similar banquet must be provided, in the ensuing week, in order to conclude it; for which also the poor must be the paymasters.

“Having now,” added the Demon, “shewn you some of the lowest of the people, I shall immediately introduce you to a sight of the highest:” And he had no sooner declared his intention, than they changed

changed their situation for a balcony, in a more fashionable part of the town.

“What splendid company,” exclaimed Don Cleofas, “do I now see in the apartments of the large hotel before us. It must surely be some festival of a very solemn nature, that is celebrating with so much magnificence.” “It is the baptism,” answered Asmodeus, “of a child of one of the first families in the kingdom; and no less personages than their Majesties themselves, attend as Sponsors on the occasion.

“In presenting the King of this country to your view, I shew you one of the best monarchs and best men in Europe. He unites the power of a great empire with the virtues of a good man. The possession of a most extensive dominion, with all the pomp of splendour and wealth of the British crown, has not corrupted his mind. He is a faithful husband—a tender father—an indulgent master—and a pious man.
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His throne is to be envied by the potentates of the earth, not so much from its political elevation above them, as from the peculiar supports of it,—the ardent loyalty and affectionate devotion of a great and enlightened people.

“The Lady who stands opposite to him, is his royal consort. I shall not remark on the benignity of her aspect—on the grace of her manners—or on the number of her virtues;—I shall only observe, that she is worthy the heart she possesses, and the crown she wears. The two princesses, who support her, are, if I may use the expression, unfortunately pre-eminent,—for there is not a prince in Europe who is deserving of them.”

“This is a spectacle,” said Don Cleofas, “which I behold with equal awe and delight; nor can I well express the sensations of my mind, while I regard the elevated objects before me.” “Nevertheless,”

less," replied the Demon, "there is a ridiculous circumstance belonging to this magnificent ceremony, which I cannot bring myself to withhold from you. I will forgive your surprise, when I assure you, that the infant who is now receiving a name from the lips of the Sovereign, is no longer to be found in the register of life. It breathed its last at the very moment when the royal Sponsors entered the house; but the honour was too great to be resisted, and the preparations were too costly to be thrown away. It was, therefore, determined, by the noble parents, that the ceremony should proceed, according to its original design, and the publication of the child's death be put off till to-morrow."

"It is surely impossible," exclaimed Don Cleofas;—"what, christen a corpse!" "Be not quite so hasty, my good friend," replied the Demon; "if, as you well know, it is an allowable practice, among you Papists, to baptise a child *before it is born*;

born; you cannot be offended, if, under such circumstances, and to preserve courtly etiquette, a Protestant child should, for once, be baptised *after it is dead*.

“ But we must now quit the scene before us; and to finish the evening of this busy day, we will just take a peep into one of the theatres; which, I think, will form a very characteristic conclusion of it.”

C H A P. XII.

*The second Visit of the DEVIL upon Two
STICKS and DON CLEOFAS to the Theatre.*

AS they entered the playhouse,—“gracious Heaven!” exclaimed the Count, “if the avenues are so crowded, I must be indebted to your extraordinary power, I should suppose, to procure a seat in the body of the theatre.” “Be not alarmed,” answered the Demon, “for we shall find room enough within, though we are so jostled without. Besides, this is a place where our fraternity possess a very peculiar influence: it is, indeed, the only one where we can meet in common; for there is not a Devil of us all, who does not find employment in a playhouse.

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“The part of it where we now are, is called the *Box-lobby*; and is nightly infested by a crowd of a young men, who are a disgrace to society. Among all these smart, powdered, gallant young men, who are continually disturbing the audience by their frequent exits and entrances, there is not to be seen one single gentleman. The present mode of dress, like the robe of death, levels all distinctions; and in passing along, it would be rather difficult to distinguish an attorney’s clerk from a peer of the realm, but by the decency and unassuming appearance of the latter.—The play is now drawing towards a conclusion; we will, therefore, in the mean time, occupy this corner, to take a cursory view of the agreeable people who are strutting about before us.

“That young man,” continued the Demon, “in a blue coat, and a buff waistcoat, is a young taylor, who must be allowed to possess some merit,—for his
cloaths

cloaths are of his own making. The person who follows, in a dress of the same colour, with a yellow cape, is a shoemaker, who is stretching a new pair of boots on his own legs, by order of one of his father's customers. The acquaintance whom he salutes, in passing, follows a branch of the same trade, with this difference indeed, that the one makes shoes for men, and the other for horses.—He who comes next, is an haberdasher; and he who follows, is a pickpocket. This blustering hero, who looks as if he would knock down everybody who meets him, is a dangerous kind of fellow, and is used to the handling of a very powerful weapon,—for he is journeyman to a druggist, and passes much of his time in the exercise of a pestle and mortar. That gallant figure who is addressing himself to a couple of ladies, is a young surgeon, who walks the hospital; and is, at this moment, offering his service to cure them of a disorder, of which he has not hitherto been able to cure himself. That tall, thin
figure

figure of a man, who is old enough to be the grandfather of all around him, is a German Baron, and by profession a pimp. His present business is to provide half a dozen of the handsomest prostitutes he can find, to sup with an old goatish Lord, at an adjoining brothel. The man in a long great-coat and dirty boots, with a whip in his hand, is the son of a confectioner, who does not mount an horse half a dozen times a year; but has bedaubed his boots with his own hands in an alley, as he came along, in order to have the credit, among some of his female acquaintance, whom he will meet here to-night, of having hunted this morning with the King, in the neighbourhood of Windsor. The well-dressed person who entered immediately after him, and whose white silk-stockings and glistening shoes have not a speck on them, has, nevertheless, rode very hard indeed within these few hours; for this very afternoon he committed a robbery on the highway, about ten miles from town, and

saved himself from being taken, by the speed of the animal on which he was mounted.

“Observe, I beg of you,” continued the Demon, “that plain-dressed man with his hat in his hand, who is now passing by us. Take notice of his unassuming appearance, and in what a quiet way he is, as it were, threading the crowd. That is, nevertheless, a baronet of high character, and a member of Parliament, who has an estate of, at least, ten thousand pounds a year. His lady and daughter are in a side-box, and he is come to conduct them home. The Herculean figure who follows him, and looks as if he had been sacrificing too liberally to Bacchus, assumes that appearance in order to produce a little disturbance in the course of the evening, which, by confusing the company, will give some of the gang of pickpockets, with whom he is associated, a more convenient opportunity of adding to the
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the nocturnal spoil of watches, purses and pocket-handkerchiefs. That comely man, with an hat so fiercely cocked, and with ribband enough in his cockade to supply half a dozen general officers, was originally a serjeant, who, by prostituting his wife to the colonel of a regiment, obtained a pair of colours in it. His advanced situation, however, not proving agreeable to the corps, and being, consequently, uncomfortable to himself, he obtained leave to sell the commission which he had not bought; and, after a variety of hair-breadth escapes, is, at length, become a respectable member of a society of gamblers, who support themselves by decoying such young men as you see here, into their company, and pilfering them of their money. The young fellow in mourning, whom he is now shaking by the hand with so much warmth, is a grocer, who assists his mother in carrying on the trade of his late father, and consoles himself for having lost, last night, a week's profits of the shop, be-

cause it has introduced him to the society of gentlemen."

"But I see a person," said Don Cleofas, "who is looking over a large volume which lies open on a desk in the corner, and taking minutes from it with a pencil. He possesses, I suppose, some literary office that is attached to the theatre." "He is," answered the Demon, "one of those people who are employed to collect theatrical information for a newspaper, and he is now extracting, from the box-keeper's book, the names of such persons of character and consequence, as compose a part of this evening's audience; a list of which will form a very interesting article of a morning paper of to-morrow. He will then inform himself concerning the progress of the play, of which he has not beheld a single scene; and when the farce is over, he will retire to write an account of the plaudits which have been bestowed,—the encores that have been demanded,—and
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any little stage-blunders that may have been committed; to which will be added a few complimentary hyperboles on an actress who occasionally invites him to dinner; and a little distant severity on an actor, who in passing him this morning in the street, unluckily forgot to give him the wall.—

The gentleman who has just quitted the box before us, and is wiping his brow with a white handkerchief,—not, as it may appear, from heat, but agitation,—is a gay, wealthy merchant of the city, who keeps an elegant mistress, in a very fashionable stile, at the west-end of the town. He is returned this afternoon from Bristol, where he has been on a commercial business, and has just received the pleasure of discovering his faithful Dulcinea, who did not expect him for some days to come, in one of the upper-boxes, accompanied by a gallant Hibernian officer of the Horse-Guards.—

That consequential figure which now passes us, is one of the magistrates of this city and county, who have a salary from Go-

verment for executing the duties of the police ; and you may, perhaps, very naturally imagine, that he attends here, to check by his presence, or to punish by his activity, the enormities of the place. On the contrary, his business, at present, is rather to encourage than controul them.— He employs the severity of the laws only against those vulgar prostitutes whom cruel necessity compels to walk the streets, and they meet with no mercy from him:— But as for the harlots who live in elegant lodgings, or maintain an hospitable house, or keep their carriages, he has too much politeness and gallantry to interrupt the progress of their useful occupations. Nay, he is now come to wait upon the favourite mistress of a nobleman, who, during his absence at Newmarket, has consigned her to his protection ; and his worship fulfils the charge, by supplying, as well as he is able, the place of his noble friend. But as the play is now concluded, we will avail ourselves of the interval, before the after-piece

piece begins, to take a view of the interior decorations of the theatre."

On entering the front-boxes, the Count could not refrain from expressing his astonishment at the number of beautiful, well-dressed women, whom he beheld on every side of him. "They are," said the Demon, "all of them votaries of the lascivious divinity, who come here, as to a public mart, to tempt the purchaser of the evening; and the greater part of them, with all their decoration and gaiety, depend on the prostitution of to-night, for the bread of to-morrow. It is not possible for you to conceive what ignorance, vulgarity, impudence, wretchedness and disease, lurk beneath the gawdy frippery, and fallacious beauty which attract your notice. Those two who occupy the back-seat to the right of us, whose personal charms are set off with the most studied adjustment of fashionable attire, were, but last year, simple servant-maids, of the lowest denomination.

mination. With all their elegance, they can neither read nor write ; with all their appearance of modest demeanour, they could silence a carman by their vulgar vociferation ; and with all that bloom on their cheeks, they will shortly be forced to make application to the purifying discipline of an hospital."

" But exclusive of all moral motives," said Don Cleofas, " would it not be for the interest of those who possess the property of the theatres, to discourage the unreserved appearance of this class of women ; which, as it must be so offensive to modesty, will, of course, prevent numbers of prudent people from suffering, at least, the youthful part of their families, being familiarized with such a shocking picture of female depravity."

" The theatrical managers," said Asmodeus, " have it not in their power ; and if they had, the demands of their exche-

quer would compel them to perfer a prostitute who pays for her place, and decoys others to pay for theirs, to the most virtuous woman in the world, who has a free admittance. Besides, with what grace could a man attempt to drive a certain rank of females from any part of his theatre, to whom he is obliged to have a continual recourse for the business of the stage? It would certainly be no more than common justice, if a theatrical manager refused to admit women of infamous character, as spectators, that he should equally exclude himself from engaging persons of the same class, as performers; and under such a regulation of dramatic entertainments, they would become curiosities of the first research. If we suppose, for instance, that by some superior intervention, every fallen female should be made, at this moment, to vanish both from before and behind the curtain; what a sudden diminution there would be of the audience; while the part of it which remained, must be content with
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what they had already seen, from the impracticability of continuing the promised amusements of the evening. Luxury springs from wealth, and corruption is the offspring of luxury ; and the theatre has a very powerful tendency to aid that corruption. I do not mean," continued the Demon, " to propose any means of improving the public manners, which as you may believe, is not a part of my office ;— but to guard you against the common-place declamations on the morality of theatrical entertainments, which has no foundation in truth or experience. Nay, the dramatic performances which are the best calculated to display the beauty of virtue, and the deformity of vice, are precisely those which are favoured with the least attention. The entertainment of this evening, which is yet to come, is a masque, written by one of the first poets, of this or any other country, antient or modern ; and, in language that would scarcely be thought to disgrace
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inspiration itself, conveys the purest lessons of moral instruction. Nevertheless, with all its sublime poetry, with all its moral tendencies and virtuous energy, it would be performed to empty benches, if it were not cloathed in the tinsel garb of music, and accompanied with those decorations which at once destroy the moral effect intended to be produced by the powers of its language, and the constructions of its scenes. In short, there is no example of pedantic error which furnishes folly with a more triumphant laugh, than the impracticable theory of playhouse morality. And they who are in the habit of frequenting the theatres will be extremely fortunate, if it affords them nothing worse than an harmless amusement. Any thing better, would be not only an ignorant, but a ridiculous expectation. But we will now descend, if you please, towards the front of the box, where we shall breath, perhaps, a less indecent atmosphere.

“ The

“ The three young ladies,” continued the Demon, “ who occupy the first seat, are the daughters of a respectable tradesman in the city, whose particular connections with the theatre, in the way of business, enable him to procure a free admittance for them, whenever he requires it.— This worthy man, who—according to the trading principle, that any thing which can be got for nothing, is an advantage,—is ever ready to indulge the inclination of his girls for a pleasure with which he can gratify them at little or no expence. They accordingly are acquiring all the improvement which is to be gained by a very frequent attendance on the amusements of the playhouse. What advantages they expect to derive from such a communication with this scene of fashionable life, is very perceptible to my penetrating faculty; but I very much fear that their expectations will not be finally satisfied. The qualities which render a young woman truly amiable,

able, may not, perhaps, be obstructed by an occasional visit to the theatre : but I will venture to rest all my knowledge of the youthful female heart on the truth of this assertion, that, a continual attendance there will forward the corruption of it.— They who very seldom see a play, will be solely engaged by its representation ; but they who see plays every week, will soon consider the operations of the stage as a secondary object of their attention. The citizen's daughters, for example, have, during the whole of this evening, been much more attentive to what was passing behind, than what was acting before them ; and when the hackney-coach is conveying them home, their conversation will not be on the mimic scenes of the stage, but on the real scenes of life ; nor will their chamber discourse of to-night, embrace the stupid morality of the drama, but the more interesting morality of the front-boxes."

“You will not, however,” replied Don Cleofas, “with all your rigid prudence, exclude young women from such opportunities as offer, to hold themselves forth to the admiration of the other sex.” “You may observe,” answered the Demon, “to what objects the young men who frequent this place, devote their regards. Be assured, my good friend, that in their system of ethics, the duty of attending on modest women at a playhouse, is not to be found : and the fair ladies before us, whose father is prevented by business, from coming to attend them home, will get to their *fiacre* with no other attendance than that of a gallant young man who carries a link. But, after all, those young women who frequent public diversions in expectation of marrying happily, set out on the worst principle in the world. The men who are themselves the most fond of these amusements, despise those of the other sex, who are continually seen at them. The virtues of a retired, not the gaiety of a pub-

a public life, are the best recommendations to an husband; the person who is qualified to promote his happiness at home, not one who is anxious to seek for her own pleasure abroad, is the woman whom a man of judgment will select for the companion of his life.—But the curtain rises, and we must change the objects of our animadversion.

“The actor,” continued Asmodeus, “who has opened the scene, is delivering a soliloquy, replete with the finest morality, and heightened by the most beautiful poetry; and, in respect to it, you possess an equal advantage with the greater part of the audience: you do not understand it, and they do not attend to it. The music, however, will make you all alive; and here it comes, with its Bacchanalian uproar.—The crew that have just taken possession of the stage, represent, under various characters, the intemperate passions of love and

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wine,

wine, and the poet formed them with a view to create displeasure and disgust ; but the manager has so contrived the matter, that their appearance rather operates as an inciting example, than a deterring antidote."

Asmodeus now requested the Count to excuse his absence for a short time, and immediately quitted his seat. In about half an hour he returned, and informed his friend that he had been beckoned by one of his confraternity, who presides over the department of thievery, to give him some assistance. " One of his principal *eleves*," said the Demon, " has, this evening, made an unfortunate attack on a gentleman's purse,—for he was taken in the fact. But as my good brother could not yet spare his favourite, he craved my aid in procuring his escape ; and we so managed the matter with the officers who had him in custody, as to complete our purpose. In the mean

mean time, it may be presumed, you have seen and heard something that was not wholly unentertaining." "It may, indeed," answered Don Cleofas; "for a charming little woman has been singing with the voice of an angel, and much have I regretted, that I was not acquainted with the language of her song." "If you knew it," answered the Demon, "as well as a native of the country, your Lordship would have an equal cause of complaint; for your little Syren,—and a Syren she is, in every application of the term, is too fine a singer to be intelligible.—The lady who now occupies the scene, is delivering a succession of fine sentiments, which, thanks to the folly of mankind, are very little regarded.—She is, in fact, declaiming in a sublime strain of measured eloquence, against my honest calling.—Nay, she is, at this moment, addressing herself to Chastity with a degree of energy almost sufficient to per-

persuade one, that she herself practised the virtue."

The Demon now expressed his wish to be gone, as some very particular commissions required an immediate execution: And Don Cleofas was instantly conveyed to his Hotel.

END OF VOL. III.